

Hormone Pellets

Hormone pellet implants are a well-established procedure for delivering bio-identical hormones. We insert the pellets, which are about the size of a grain of rice, just under the skin in the region of the buttock. The procedure is less painful than a routine blood draw. The pellets used are bio-identical, which is an exact match of your own natural hormones. The doctor may use testosterone, progesterone, and estrogen pellets, depending on the need as determined by a hormone profile. Some women are surprised to learn they may need testosterone replacement as well as estrogen. Testosterone plays an important role in women as well as men. Testosterone helps with mood, brain function, bone density, and libido.

A certified compounding pharmacy compounds the pellets we use in a sterile, clean room. The pellets are available in virtually any size, so the dose is customizable to each individual woman or man. One key advantage of hormone pellets is the way they release hormones into the body. The hormones release gradually, depending on your activity. When you're more active, more hormone is available similar to the way natural hormones release in the body.

The procedure consists of the insertion of several small pellets underneath the skin. This requires a tiny incision so we can insert a trocar. We place the pellets in the trocar and deposit them under the skin several inches from the incision. We withdraw the trocar and seal the small incision with a Steri-Strip or in the case of men one or two stitches.

The patient usually feels the pellets' peak effect about six weeks after insertion. At that time, we perform a follow-up hormone level test to determine whether the dosage needs adjustment with the next pellet insertion.

Advantages

- Hormones release with physical activity, providing the hormones when needed the most.
- Women receive higher levels of testosterone, which results in a much higher libido than with other hormone delivery methods, without side effects.
- Each treatment lasts three to four months, depending on activity.

Disadvantages and risks

- The procedure is mildly invasive, and there's a small risk of infection.
- If the pellet dose is incorrect, there's no easy way to correct it.
- The most common problem is too much estrogen, which causes breast swelling. In most cases, the woman's body needs very little or no estrogen to control hot flashes since the body converts testosterone into estrogen.
- Occasionally, a woman will experience a menstrual period due to the effect of estrogen, if she uses estrogen.
- If a person is extremely active physically, the pellets may not last a full four months due to increased blood flow in the area of the pellets.
- Insurance many not cover pellet implant procedures.

Do not use pellet implants in any of the following conditions:

- Pregnancy
- Severe hypertension
- Active liver disease
- Estrogen-dependent tumors
- Undiagnosed vaginal bleeding
- Certain blood disorders, such as porphyria
- Hair growth if the doctor uses high levels of

testosterone