



Avoid methylxanthines (caffeine, theophylline and theobromine), the active agents in coffee, tea, chocolate, cola drinks and certain cold and pain relievers like Anacin, Excedrin and Midol. Methylxanthines are chemicals which block the action of certain enzymes which act as energy messengers from hormones to cells. It is believed that interrupting this mechanism leads to prolonged hormonal and growth activity which may result in the production of cysts. Peanut butter also contains methylxanthines as can decaffeinated coffee and certain herb teas like Morning Thunder.

Vitamin E (up to 600 IU daily) is a natural antagonist of excess estrogen

although the mechanism by which Vitamin E normalizes hormone levels is not understood. Many women have found significant improvement from taking Vitamin E.* (Some women, though, have found that Vitamin E aggravates their condition.) Women with diabetes, high blood pressure, rheumatic heart condition, and anyone taking drugs derived from digitalis (digoxin and digitoxin) should not take Vitamin E except under medical supervision and then only very small doses.

Selenium, a mineral, enhances the effect of Vitamin E and, along with Vitamin C, seems to be an inhibitor of unnatural tissue growth. Both selenium and Vitamin C should therefore be taken with Vitamin E. Some Vitamin E tablets have selenium in them. Garlic is the richest food source of selenium. Selenium supplements should be taken with caution and not exceed 50 mcg daily; selenium is very toxic.

B Vitamins, especially choline and inositol, are essential for the liver to perform properly its function in processing excess estrogen. Too much sugar, refined carbohydrates (white flour, etc.) and alcohol deplete the body of B vitamins so should be avoided. (Some vegetable juices such as celery and cranberry help the liver flush toxins from the body.) A good source of B vitamins is brewers yeast which also contains selenium.

Vitamin B₆ is particularly significant for its role in reducing ^{1000mg. 500mg.} It has a role in the production of the prostaglandin PGE₁ and is a natural diuretic (reduces fluid retention). Vitamin B₆ must be taken in conjunction with a B-complex vitamin -20-100mg/day as all the B vitamins work together. Start with 50 milligrams of B₆ daily and increase the dosage until some improvement is noticed (to a maximum of 800 milligrams daily). If any side effects are noticed such as nausea, gastric acidity, dizziness, headaches, sleep disturbances, difficulty walking and/or numbness in the feet, decrease the dosage immediately. The dosage has to be much higher than 800 mg daily for Vitamin B₆ to be dangerous.

Magnesium, a mineral, combines with B-6 in an enzymatic reaction that absorbs excess estrogen. It is also necessary for the production of the prostaglandin PGE₁.

Good sources of magnesium are whole grains, nuts, legumes (peas, beans and lentils), potatoes and green vegetables. Animal fats, especially dairy products, block the absorption of magnesium and alcohol depletes the body of magnesium.

NOTE: Although specific vitamins and minerals are suggested here

it is important to know that it is necessary to take a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement which provides all the required nutrients. If the multi-vitamin/mineral tablet is not adequate in a particular vitamin or mineral, the specific nutrient can be taken in addition to the multi-vitamin/mineral tablet. For example, a good multi-vitamin/mineral tablet may provide enough B complex except for B₆ which can then be taken in addition to the multi-vitamin/mineral tablet.

Decrease salt intake. As well as table salt, this includes any high sodium foods such as pickles, soy sauce, soda water, canned foods, bouillon cubes, snack foods, condiments and cured meats. Excess salt contributes to fluid retention.

Evening Primrose Oil is a natural source of gamma-linolenic acid, which is necessary for the production of the prostaglandin PGE₁. Prostaglandins are hormone-like substances. A shortage of PGE₁ has been linked with an overproduction of the hormone prolactin. PGE₁ may inhibit the effects of excess prolactin, i.e. fluid retention and breast tenderness.

(Evening Primrose Oil has helped many women with premenstrual syndrome, heavy menstrual bleeding and hot flashes, among other conditions),it

Vitamin B₆ and Vitamin E seem to make Evening Primrose Oil work more effectively. Evening Primrose Oil is available under the brand name Efamol at some vitamin and health food stores but unfortunately it is quite expensive.

Avoid refined (white) sugar: as well as robbing the body of B vitamins, it interferes with hormonal balances.

Fibre:

Excess estrogen which the body is trying to eliminate can be reabsorbed into the bloodstream if the bowels are not moving efficiently. A high fibre diet assists in regularity of bowel movements (as does lots of fluids). Foods high in fibre are bran, apples, peaches, plums, pears, prunes, leafy green vegetables, whole grain cereals, legumes (peas, beans and lentils) and root vegetables. These complex carbohydrates should form the bulk of our daily diet. Avoid refined foods such as white flour and white rice which are stripped of many of their nutrients and contribute to constipation. Flax seeds, garlic and dandelion leaf tea are also aids to regularity, as is exercise. It is important to avoid the regular use of laxatives. When really necessary, use a gentle herbal laxative or drink prune juice.

Use seaweeds: they are a natural source of iodine.

Iodine is necessary to break down fats and is also an estrogen antagonist.

Various kinds of seaweeds are available in health food stores and in Japanese stores. They can be used whole in soups or in powdered form. Kelp is easily available in powdered form and can be used as a salt substitute in soups, stews, etc.

Avoid saturated fats (fats which harden when cool) and use instead unsaturated cold-pressed vegetable oils such as safflower, sunflower and soy oil.

Lecithin contains choline and inositol which help the liver process excess estrogen. Take 1-2 teaspoons of lecithin granules daily; they can be sprinkled on fruit or yogurt or mixed in fruit juice.

Herbs: some herbs are diuretics i.e. they reduce fluid retention. Some diuretic herbs which can be made into teas are dandelion, camomile, spearmint and raspberry leaf. Herbs should be used sparingly (not more than 3 times a day for a tea made from these herbs, and then only when necessary). Also uva ursi & parsley.

Celery & cranberry juice help the liver flush toxins from the body.

Avoid certain estrogen containing foods: whole wheat, citrus rinds, wild yams, animal fats and dairy products (milk, butter, cheese, etc.; yogurt is acceptable).

Don't smoke: nicotine stimulates abnormal breast tissue growth in a similar way to methylxanthines.

Don't Drink: The yeast - the Saccharomyces yeast - which is used in the fermentation process, produces estrogen in the fermentation, and that shows up in significant levels, particularly in beer.

Food sensitivity: adverse reactions to foods, as well as to methylxanthines, can trigger or worsen disease. Sensitivity can exist to such common foods as wheat, beef and sugar. Self-testing can be done by eliminating three or four of the most common foods in the diet, one at a time, for 10 to 14 days. If the condition improves and then worsens again when the food is reintroduced, this is good evidence of a relationship between the food and the condition. More sophisticated allergy testing can be done by an allergist.

Other treatments:

- exercise
- massage
- relaxation/meditation/biofeedback
- visualization
- acupuncture
- homeopathy
- liver flushes
- macrobiotic diet
- fasting/detoxification