

Dayton Daily News

JournalNews

Submitted: 11:41 a.m. Monday, Jan. 27, 2014

Email 2 Facebook 0 Twitter 0 ShareThis 3

By Christie Schmidt - Contributing Writer

In 2004, then 49-year-old Lyn Hogrefe found herself on the verge of plunging headfirst into menopause after undergoing an emergency radical hysterectomy. She was fearful of the physical and emotional changes that lay ahead as her body adjusted to functioning sans a uterus and ovaries.

Hogrefe's husband, Jeff, was also concerned. A longtime pharmacist, he'd heard the stories of what women in similar situations as his wife experienced when they came in to pick up their prescription hormone products: significant weight gain, irritability, depression, anxiety, low energy, brain fog and no libido. Determined to do all he could to prevent these things from happening to his wife, he became a compounding pharmacist and created a bioidentical hormone replacement cream specifically for her.



Lyn Hogrefe (left), CEO of Happy Hormone Cottage in Mason, counsels a client. The company has helped 4,000 women in the Midwest achieve hormone balance and better health through bioidentical hormones.

CONTRIBUTED

“Jeff went with me to my follow-up appointment and presented my doctor with the idea of trying the bioidentical hormone therapy,” Hogrefe said. “Thankfully, my doctor was very open-minded and supportive of me giving it a try.”

The result?

“I didn’t experience any of the issues that women with hormonal imbalances experience – especially those who have undergone a radical hysterectomy. I didn’t gain any weight and I didn’t experience any depression, anxiety, brain fog, lack of energy or low libido. It was then that we knew we were on to something.”

However, after speaking with many women in their 30s, 40s and beyond, she realized that many were not only still feeling lousy despite being on anti-depressants, sleeping aids and estrogen, but they also were not being educated on all of their options – including healthy, natural, compounded hormones. A lifelong educator herself, Hogrefe used her skills and expertise to get potentially life-changing information into the hands of those who needed it most.

And so, Hogrefe and her husband opened Happy Hormone Cottage in 2009 in the heart of Centerville, as a place for women meet and talk about their journey, obtain information on natural compounded hormones, get questions answered and help in finding a physician who supports this type of treatment. To date, they have helped some 4,000 women in the midwest achieve hormone balance and better health through the use of bioidentical hormones. These compounded, personalized prescriptions of hormone creams (biestrogen, progesterone and testosterone) are mixed at Piqua Consulting and Compounding Lab in Piqua.

“There is a huge disconnect between listening to our body, and the information we get from the medical community,” Hogrefe said. “At Happy Hormone Cottage, we’re into functional medicine, which is a very patient-centered approach. We believe in addressing the person as a whole and not just isolated symptoms.”

Unlike the blood tests most physicians’ offices use to test hormone levels, Happy Hormone Cottage uses urine to test hormone levels, all in the comfort of a patient’s own home. Hogrefe said insurance reimbursement has been high for the \$350 test kit because urine testing is an accepted means of testing. They provide clients with the necessary forms to submit to their insurance provider. To make things even easier and convenient, HHC now has a nurse practitioner on staff who is able to write the prescriptions for patients.

Oakwood resident Linda Hart stumbled upon Happy Hormone Cottage three years ago, when she was researching her options for hormone replacement therapy after a sudden and severe onslaught of menopausal symptoms.

“My doctor told me at my annual appointment that since I was 50 years old, I shouldn’t be on birth control pills anymore,” Hart said. Once off of them, she immediately started with menopausal symptoms: hot flashes, sleep disturbances, mental fogginess, extreme fatigue, and weight gain.

“I felt terrible,” Hart said. “My doctor’s solution was to put me on Prempro [a combination of conjugated estrogens and medroxyprogesterone] but I’d read about so many patients having negative reactions to it that I started to do some research on other options. That’s when I came across bioidentical hormone therapy and Happy Hormone Cottage.”

Hart scheduled an appointment and went in for a consultation, completed the testing kit and was eventually prescribed a bioidentical hormone cream made specifically for her.

“My OB/GYN at the time wouldn’t prescribe it so Happy Hormone Cottage helped me find a doctor that would,” Hart said. “Within weeks I felt 100 percent better. The hot flashes stopped, I could sleep at night again, I wasn’t tired all the time and I dropped 10 pounds. My doctor now refers women to the Happy Hormone Cottage all the time.”

Happy Hormone Cottage’s Centerville location was such a huge success, that the Hogrefes have opened four more local offices in Kettering, Vandalia, Mason and Crestview Hills, Ky. They also have offices in Bridgeton and Chesterfield, Missouri.

For more information on The Happy Hormone Cottage or to schedule a free consultation, visit the website: www.happyhormonecottage.com. Office locations, phone numbers and hours of operation can be found on the website.

Educating community on hormone balancing therapy

This past December, Happy Hormone Cottage chief executive officer Lyn Hogrefe created Happy Hormone Cottage Consulting (HHC Consulting) in an effort to educate the medical community on hormone balancing therapy. The service also aims to help doctors integrate bioidentical hormone therapy into patient treatment plans.

“Not much is taught in medical school about women’s hormones and the need to help each woman achieve hormonal balance for optimal health,” Hogrefe said. “We want to educate medical personnel so they can reach as many women as possible. We would like to mentor nurse practitioners, guide them on diagnostic testing and work with them and their local compounding pharmacies.”

HHC Consulting will provide hands-on training and materials to teach doctors and medical staff how to work with female patients so that programs are meaningful and successful. Curriculum includes clinical and staff training and marketing support.

“I’m really on a mission to help women and their doctors get educated, get treated and get better,” Hogrefe said. “Bioidentical hormone therapy is very affordable – about \$1 per day. We are building relationships with women every day, who tell their friends and family so they can get better, too.”