

Coping with Hormonal Changes— Whether 18 or 80—with *Essential Woman*



An Interview with Nutritionist Ann Louise Gittleman, N.D., C.N.S.

How can women live comfortably with hormonal changes throughout their lives—from premenstrual syndrome to perimenopause to menopause? For insight into coping with hormonal changes, we sent reporter Rachael Baseley to interview one of the nation's leading experts in this area of women's health. You may well be familiar with nutritionist and women's health expert Ann Louise Gittleman, N.D., C.N.S. from her numerous radio interviews and radio spots as a spokesperson for various women's health products, as well as regular online chats on websites such as power-surge.com where she helps women who are hungry for the nutritional insights of “the first lady of nutrition.” A certified nutrition specialist and expert in women's health and education, Gittleman is author of 16 books on health and nutrition, with some 3.5 million copies in print.

Gittleman spoke with us recently about the benefits of her **Essential Woman** nutritional formula and her most recent book, *Eat Fat, Lose Weight Cookbook* (Keats 2001).



The Doctors' Prescription for Healthy Living: *Ann Louise, since we last spoke, we have had a great response from women who wish to try The Essential Woman formula for their own hormonal balancing needs. You helped to create The Essential Woman in partnership with Barlean's. How did that come about?*

Ann Louise Gittleman: At the time, I was very frustrated because there was no combination of straight flax and evening primrose oil. For years, my own clientele and readers had been raving about how well evening primrose oil worked for PMS symptoms as well as alleviating migraine headaches. So, I thought to myself: we need the best of both worlds. We need the flax, which is important as we start reaching perimenopause and menopause, and for those women who are suffering from PMS, we need the wonderful healing benefits of evening primrose oil. So I went to the very best nutritional oil company in America, Barlean's Organic Oils, and we came up with a formula that combines both flax with evening primrose. What is most gratifying beyond my wildest dreams are the extraordinary testimonials women send me daily. These women say they have no

more PMS or mood swings. They have better-looking skin, hair, nails, and, in some cases, larger breasts. Some women have told me they have experienced a reduction in tumors, which, although gratifying to hear about, certainly needs to be scientifically validated. That The Essential Woman is a very effective women's supplement is shown by the fact that it is one of the best-selling supplements currently in its category in the natural products industry.

DPHL: *At what age may women benefit from The Essential Woman?*

ALG: As far as I'm concerned, because we deal with PMS, perimenopause, menopause and beyond, this is a product for women from ages eighteen to eighty.

DPHL: *Can The Essential Woman be used at the same time as hormone replacement therapy?*

ALG: Absolutely! Some women take a tablespoon of the formula with either prescription estrogen or herbal hormone replacements. It is a wonderful adjunct to these. It also works successfully as a replacement to the synthetic hormones doctors frequently prescribe.

DPHL: *Is The Essential Woman useful for women who are not experiencing PMS, perimenopausal or menopausal symptoms?*

ALG: As I like to say, The Essential Woman is useful for PMS to perimenopause to menopause—and beyond. The Essential Woman is also great for women who want to reduce their risk for breast cancer—since flax has such a protective effect against this disease. What's important for women to know is that the flax-based lignans in The Essential Woman formula detoxify the undesirable estrogen. The Essential Woman is also a vital formula for women who been eating fat-free diets. If they've been on a low-to-no fat diet for ten to fifteen years, then they're deficient in the omega-3 fatty acid, as well as in what I call the good omega-6 fatty acids only evening primrose oil will supply. The Essential Woman will help to correct these underlying deficiencies.

DPHL: *How should women use The Essential Woman formula?*

ALG: If you are not on HRT and use Essential Woman as your primary hormone replacement therapy, two tablespoons a day is perfect. If you're using other substances—from natural herbs

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to homeopathics to compounded substances—take one tablespoon per day.

DPHL: *How long does it take for women to receive its benefits?*

ALG: Some women see a difference within a few days. Some of the most common benefits include a return of the dewy skin of youth; stronger fingernails; shiny hair; and, even a lift in mood, which may be related to the wonderful high omega-3 fatty acid content of the formula's flax oil.

DPHL: *Is it important to store The Essential Woman formula correctly?*

ALG: I would say so, yes. I always say it can be stored for maybe three to three-and-a-half weeks at most. You want to store the formula, which is very sensitive to heat, air and light, in the refrigerator.

DPHL: *Where can women obtain The Essential Woman?*

ALG: It's widely available at natural health centers nationwide.

DPHL: *You recently published the Eat Fat, Lose Weight Cookbook from Keats Publishing. Tell us a little about the book.*

ALG: It's a fun book that shows men and women how to lose weight by eating 'good' fats. What we've discovered is that certain fats actually supercharge your metabolism and trigger the body's natural fat burners. This means you can shake off the pounds much more quickly with a tablespoon or two of flaxseed oil or even a handful of almonds or walnuts, than you can with all of those no-to-low fat rice cakes that were so popular a few years ago.

DPHL: *According to the book, it is acceptable to eat fat. Well, as you know, a lot of women today suffer from fat phobia. What do you tell women who are so fearful of consuming fat?*

ALG: Quite honestly, what we've been taught about fat has been dead wrong. The facts tell the story. Since our society went on its fat-free fad, about 62 percent of the American population—over 110 million of us—are obese. Clearly, no-to-low fat diets have failed us miserably. We also see an increase

in many degenerative diseases. Type II diabetes, which is now rampant among individuals 30 to 39 years of age, has had a 70 percent increase. The low fat diets have failed us, because, when you do not have natural, healthy fats in the diet, your body reacts by converting carbohydrates into fat. In terms of your biochemical balance, if you don't have the right fat, then you are going to have major craving signals. If you're consuming the right kinds of fats, you won't get these urges, because you'll have your fat needs taken care of correctly.

DPHL: *The cookbook talks frequently about The Essential Woman. Do you consider it an essential ingredient to the recipes?*

ALG: For some of the recipes, very definitely. If you take a look at some of our smoothies, I do insist that people use The Essential Woman as their oil component. Very specifically, you're going to find the formula in the Peanut Butter Crunch Smoothie—a great tasting smoothie, in my humble estimation! You can also use The Essential Woman in the Arctic Smoothie complementing this very refreshing and delicious fast-food breakfast, as I call it. This goes to show you how you can be creative, and get this into your diet in a very easy manner.

DPHL: *Can you add The Essential Woman to those recipes that don't mention it as an ingredient?*

ALG: Theoretically, this is a product that you cannot use in heated foods. You certainly don't want to cook with it, so what you can do is drizzle it on already cooked veggies, or even oatmeal or brown rice. It has such a nutty flavor to it. It's also very buttery, and I often tell women that if they want a little treat, just air-pop some popcorn, and then put a tablespoon or two on the popcorn—and you've got a very satisfying nibble.

DPHL: *How should readers use your cookbook? Do they need to stick to its recipes in order to lose weight?*

ALG: They need to stick to some of the basics. Add a little bit of the

good fats from the different omega families mentioned in the book for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and for two snacks a day. My cookbook tells them how to do that very easily and tastefully. Just stick to the basics, and you're going to be so filled up, because fat really fills you faster and longer, and you will have no room for anything else. You're really content with less food, less calories. You can personalize the diet for your individual taste. By consuming tons of veggies, moderate amounts of fruits, and certainly the quality oils, you have a foundation for healthy eating.

DPHL: *What if someone doesn't need to lose weight but is interested in maintaining a healthy, balanced diet?*

ALG: This program works for them as well. You would simply want to follow the basic program, but add a serving or two of a natural starch back into your diet. Try some of the starchier vegetables, and that way, you can start to level off the weight loss or just maintain the weight that you have lost in the first place.

DPHL: *If you had to choose three favorite recipes from your cookbook, which would they be?*

ALG: My very favorite is the Pepita Plum Dressing, because it uses pumpkin seeds as a base. Then there is a Hawaiian Chicken Salad that I personally adore, because it's a one-stop shop meal. Finally, there is Party Pâté which has some unusual ingredients in it that just really work.

DPHL: *What are your plans for the future? Do you have any ideas for other supplements or books?*

ALG: I am currently working on *The Complete Authentic Fat-flush Diet Book*. That's my main project right now. ❖