



# **Hormonal Health 101: A Patient's Guide to Endocrine Wellness in Pierce County**

By Dr. Robert Kimmel, Board-Certified Endocrinologist

Viewpoint Endocrinology - Puyallup, WA

[1029 E Main Ave #104, Puyallup, WA 98372](#)

Phone: [\(253\) 446-6977](#)

Fax: (253) 604-4703

[www.viewpointendocrinology.com](#)

## **Welcome**

Hormones affect every part of your health—from your energy and weight to your mood, sleep, and even how your body heals and grows. When something feels "off" in your body and you can't quite explain it, the root cause may be a hormone imbalance.

This guide was written to help people in Puyallup and throughout Pierce County better understand what hormones do, how to recognize when something might be wrong, and what steps to take if you suspect a hormone issue. Whether you're managing diabetes, thyroid problems, fatigue, or just want answers—you're in the right place.

## **Chapter 1: What Are Hormones?**

Hormones are your body's chemical messengers. They're made in organs like the thyroid, pancreas, adrenal glands, and pituitary gland, and they travel through your bloodstream to regulate:

- Energy and metabolism

- Blood sugar levels
- Mood and stress

- Growth and development
- Reproduction and fertility
- Bone and muscle strength
- Sleep cycles
- Body temperature

When hormones are balanced, you feel like yourself. When they're not, even simple things can feel difficult.

## **Chapter 2: Signs Your Hormones May Be Out of Balance**

Hormonal imbalances can sneak up on you. The symptoms are often brushed off or mistaken for stress, aging, or lifestyle problems. But if you're experiencing any of the following regularly, it's worth talking to an endocrinologist:

- Constant fatigue or low energy
- Weight gain (especially around the belly)
- Difficulty losing weight despite effort
- Trouble sleeping or waking up too early
- Brain fog or trouble concentrating
- Mood swings, irritability, or depression
- Hair thinning or hair loss
- Irregular periods or fertility issues
- Feeling cold or hot all the time
- Excessive sweating or dry skin
- Increased thirst or frequent urination
- Muscle weakness or joint pain

## **Chapter 3: Common Conditions Treated by an Endocrinologist**

At Viewpoint Endocrinology, we help people manage a wide range of conditions, including:

- Diabetes (Type 1, Type 2, Gestational)
- Thyroid Disorders (Hypothyroidism, Hyperthyroidism, Hashimoto's, Graves' disease)
- Osteoporosis & Bone Loss
- Adrenal Disorders (Cushing's, Addison's)

- Pituitary Disorders
- PCOS & Reproductive Hormone Imbalances
- Metabolic Syndrome & Weight Management
- Calcium Imbalances & Parathyroid Disorders

Each condition affects your body in unique ways, and treatment is always customized. You're not a lab result- you're a whole person.

## **Chapter 4: Questions to Ask Your Endocrinologist**

Feeling prepared for your first appointment can make a big difference. Here are some helpful questions to bring with you:

- What could be causing my symptoms?
- What tests will you be ordering?
- How accurate are the test results?
- If I do have a hormone imbalance, what are my treatment options?
- Will I need medication? For how long?
- Are there side effects or things I should watch out for?
- How often will I need follow-ups?
- What lifestyle changes can support my hormone health?
- What happens if I choose not to treat it right now?

## **Chapter 5: Evidence-Based Tips to Support Hormonal Health**

Even small lifestyle changes can help balance your hormones and improve how you feel day to day.

Simple but Powerful Habits:

- Prioritize Sleep: Aim for 7-9 hours per night.
- Manage Stress: Chronic stress raises cortisol.
- Move Your Body: Even a 30-minute walk helps.
- Eat Balanced Meals: Include fats, protein, and fiber.
- Limit Processed Foods: Excess sugar worsens hormonal issues.
- Get Labs Done Regularly: Catch changes early.
- Listen to Your Body: Don't ignore persistent symptoms.

## **Chapter 6: When to See an Endocrinologist in Pierce County**

If you live in Puyallup, South Hill, Sumner, Graham, Bonney Lake, Spanaway, or anywhere in Pierce County, you have access to experienced hormone care right here at Viewpoint Endocrinology.

You should consider making an appointment if:

- You've had abnormal lab results related to blood sugar, thyroid, or calcium.
- You've been diagnosed with a hormone condition but want a specialist's opinion.
- You're frustrated that your symptoms aren't being taken seriously.
- You want to get to the root of your health issues-not just treat symptoms.

### **Final Thoughts from Dr. Kimmel**

You don't need to keep pushing through symptoms or guessing what's wrong. Hormonal health is complex, but answers do exist, and you deserve real solutions. If you've been wondering whether to seek help, this is your sign to take the next step.

We're here to listen, test, explain, and help you get back to feeling like yourself again.

- Dr. Robert Kimmel, MD

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### **Ready to Talk?**

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