



Why Use Saliva to Test Hormones?

There are two ways of testing hormone levels:

- Blood serum
- Saliva

Saliva testing is a simple, noninvasive way to assess hormone levels. It's also proving to be the more reliable of the two testing methods.

To see why saliva testing is the preferred method, a basic understanding of how hormones act in the body should be known. Most hormones exist in the body in one of two forms:

- Free (5%)
- Bound by proteins (95%)

Only free hormones are biologically active, or bio-available, for delivery to receptors in the body. Hormones that are protein-bound do not fit those receptors and are considered biologically unavailable. In short, only free hormones can be used by the body.

Saliva Measures Free Hormones

When blood is filtered through the salivary glands, the protein-bound hormones are too large to pass through the cell membranes. Only free hormones can pass through and into the saliva. Therefore, what is measured in the saliva is strictly the free or bioavailable hormone - what can be used by the body.

Salivary hormone levels are typically much lower than blood serum levels, since only the free hormones are being measured. When health care providers instead measure blood serum hormone levels, and prescribe hormone replacement therapy based on those results, patients are often overdosed. When this happens and patients are given hormone therapy, and are then tested using saliva, the results can be extraordinarily high. When mixing the two testing methods, results can become highly confusing.

*The information provided is not meant as a replacement for a physician's care.
Some or all of the above may help you feel more balanced and give you an overall increased sense of wellbeing.*