



TrueFem Module Notes: Anatomy & Physiology

Section 1: You & Your Hormones

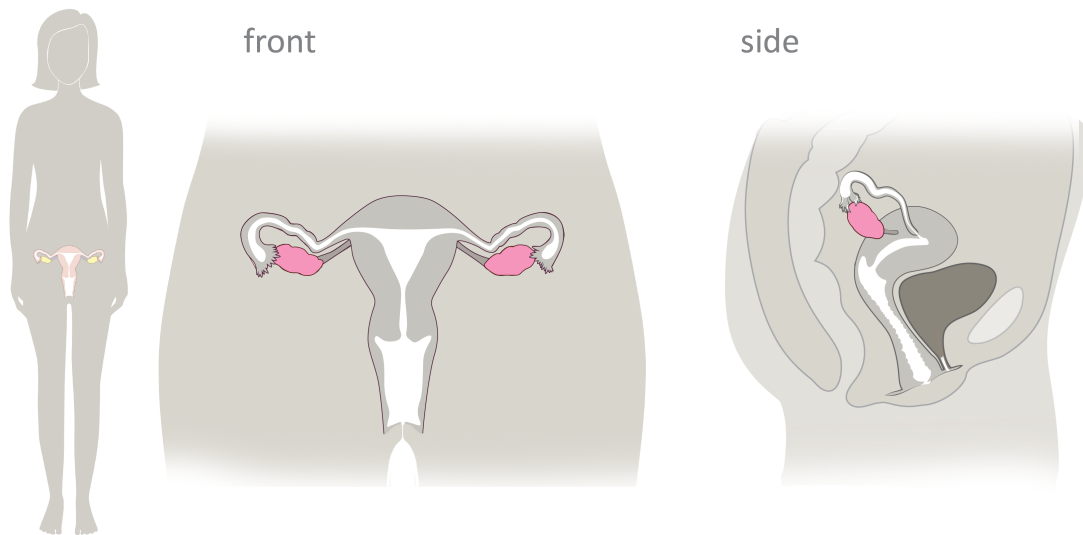
All organ function is based on hormones.

- Hormones are chemical messengers that direct the activities of the body.
- Hormones are essential to life-sustaining functions such as digesting food, sleeping and responding to stress. They work in chain reactions to cause responses in cells.
- The main hormones of the female reproductive system, made in the ovaries, are estrogen and progesterone.

Section 2: Basic Anatomy

- **The ovaries** are two small organs on either side of the uterus suspended by ligaments. Females are born with about a million immature eggs and do not produce new ones. Women will release about 500 eggs in their reproductive lives. The ovaries produce the hormones estrogen and progesterone.
- **The fallopian tubes** are two thin tubes attached to either side of the uterus. After ovulation, the egg is swept into the fallopian tube. Fertilization by sperm occurs in the outer 1/3 of the fallopian tube. These tubes are the pathway to the uterus. The egg takes about 4-5 days to travel to the uterus and will implant in the wall of uterus if fertilization has occurred 6-9 days after ovulation.
- **The uterus** is a hollow, muscular organ which can expand to many times its size in pregnancy. The inner lining of the uterus is where a newly formed embryo implants during pregnancy. If no pregnancy occurs, the lining of the uterus shed in menstruation.

- **The cervix** sits in the lower portion of the uterus and is a narrow canal opening into the vagina. The cervix has glands that respond to reproductive hormones and secrete mucus. Observing for cervical mucus can alert a woman to times of fertility and infertility.
- **The vagina** is a canal that connects the uterus to the outside of the body and is the entrance to the reproductive tract. It is the exit for menstrual bleeding and cervical mucus, as well as a baby during delivery.



Section 3: Your reproductive health is controlled by hormones

The brain signals the ovaries to mature an egg and produce the main female hormones: estrogen and progesterone. These hormones influence the reproductive system and the health of the entire body.