

# 7 Little-Known Symptoms Of A Hormonal Imbalance To Look Out For

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Andrew Zaeh for Bustle

While worrying about having balanced hormones in your 20s might seem unnecessary, you likely are aware of the most well-known symptoms, like moodiness and hot flashes. Hormonal issues, however, often don't discriminate based off of age. Knowing the [symptoms of hormone imbalance](#) is a good way to make sure you're as healthy as possible both now and in the future.

Hormone imbalances don't just affect your reproductive system. Having things askew can cause health problems throughout your body. To understand this, it's important to understand how hormones work. "Hormones are chemicals in the blood that act as the messaging system to coordinate appropriate function among parts of the body that are not close to each other," Dr. Joshua U Klein, chief medical officer and reproductive endocrinologist at Extend Fertility tells Bustle. So even if your hormonal issues start in one place, the symptoms might travel far.

Physical and emotional reactions to hormone imbalances can vary. "From a general health standpoint, out of balance hormones can cause difficulties such as low energy levels, skin issues such as acne, and [...] interferences with becoming pregnant," ophthalmologist Dr. Ming Wang says. These are all issues to be aware of in your 20s.

Your hormones can become imbalanced any time. "Any type of disturbance to your physical or emotional health — including stress, lack of sleep, [and] change in eating habits — can disrupt this hormone balance," Dr. Klein says. You may not notice disruptions in your menstrual cycle if you're on hormonal birth control, so it's important to know the symptoms.

Here are seven little-known symptoms of hormone imbalance to look out for, according to experts.

## **1. Cystic Acne**

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Hormonal acne is not just for teenagers. If you've been noticing acne that won't go away with your typical skincare regimen, or in very specific places, like [chin acne](#) or lip acne, you may be dealing with a hormone imbalance.

"Acne is a common manifestation of hormone imbalance in young women," Susan Bard, MD of [Manhattan Dermatology Specialists](#), tells Bustle. "It is important to rebalance the hormones to control the acne to prevent any scarring which may be permanent." Both dermatologists and other physicians should be able to help with acne caused by hormonal issues.

## 2. Hair Loss

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Even if you're not feeling particularly moody, your hormones may still be telling you they're off kilter in other ways. One of these lesser-known [signs is hair loss](#).

"Early-onset female pattern balding may be a sign of hormone imbalance," Dr. Bard says. "When treated early, hair thinning can be reversed but if allowed to progress may become permanent." If you notice any changes to your hair, it's important to discuss the potential cause with a doctor.

### **3. Dry Eye**

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you're having new or worsening eye problems, you may be dealing with a hormone issue.

"From an eye standpoint, the most common issue related with hormone imbalance is dry eye," Dr. Wang says. "Dry eye can be more severe when normal hormones are altered, such as in periods of stress, pregnancy, normal variation, and with relationship to birth control agents." Mild dry eye can be treated over-the-counter, but if you're having any serious issues, seeing a doctor is important.

## **4. Facial Hair**

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If you've noticed more facial hair than usual, it's possible you're dealing with a hormone imbalance. Luckily, it's likely not a permanent issue.

"Excessive facial hair [...] is another common sign of hormone imbalance," Dr. Bard says. "Correcting the imbalance will often times diminish the hair growth." A gynecologist or primary care physician will likely be able to help if it becomes particularly bothersome.

## 5. Vision Fluctuation

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"The second most common eye issue related to hormones is vision fluctuation," Dr. Wang says. " [...] Altered hormone balance actually causes minute changes in curvature (steepness) of the front surface of the eye. This can lead to temporary vision changes." Most of these vision problems are most common during pregnancy or nursing, and go away with treatment. Still, any vision issues are important to bring to a doctor.

## **6. Headaches**

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imbalance, recurring headaches may be another sign.

"Headaches are a common reason young women in their twenties visit the doctor," licensed chiropractor and certified clinical nutritionist [Dr. Ian Stern](#) tells Bustle.

"Most suspect it's cause is from tension and stress. What is not regularly recognized is that abnormal estrogen levels can trigger headaches." Figuring out your triggers, the timing, and the location of the headache can help give you the data you need for diagnosis and treatment.

## 7. Unhealthy Bones

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Whether or not you've broken a bone recently, it's important to consider your bone health when taking hormones into account. Bone pain and other bone issues could be due to a hormone imbalance.

"Another important but frequently overlooked issue related to hormone balance is bone health," Dr. Klein says. "[...] Adequate estrogen production is crucial to support bone health." And later in life, these hormone-related bone problems can include osteopenia and [osteoporosis](#).

Hormone imbalance can be difficult to diagnose, but paying attention to all of the signals your body is sending you, and knowing the symptoms, can keep you healthy in the long-run. Knowing your body means going to the doctor as soon as possible when something goes wrong, and getting treatment sooner rather than later.