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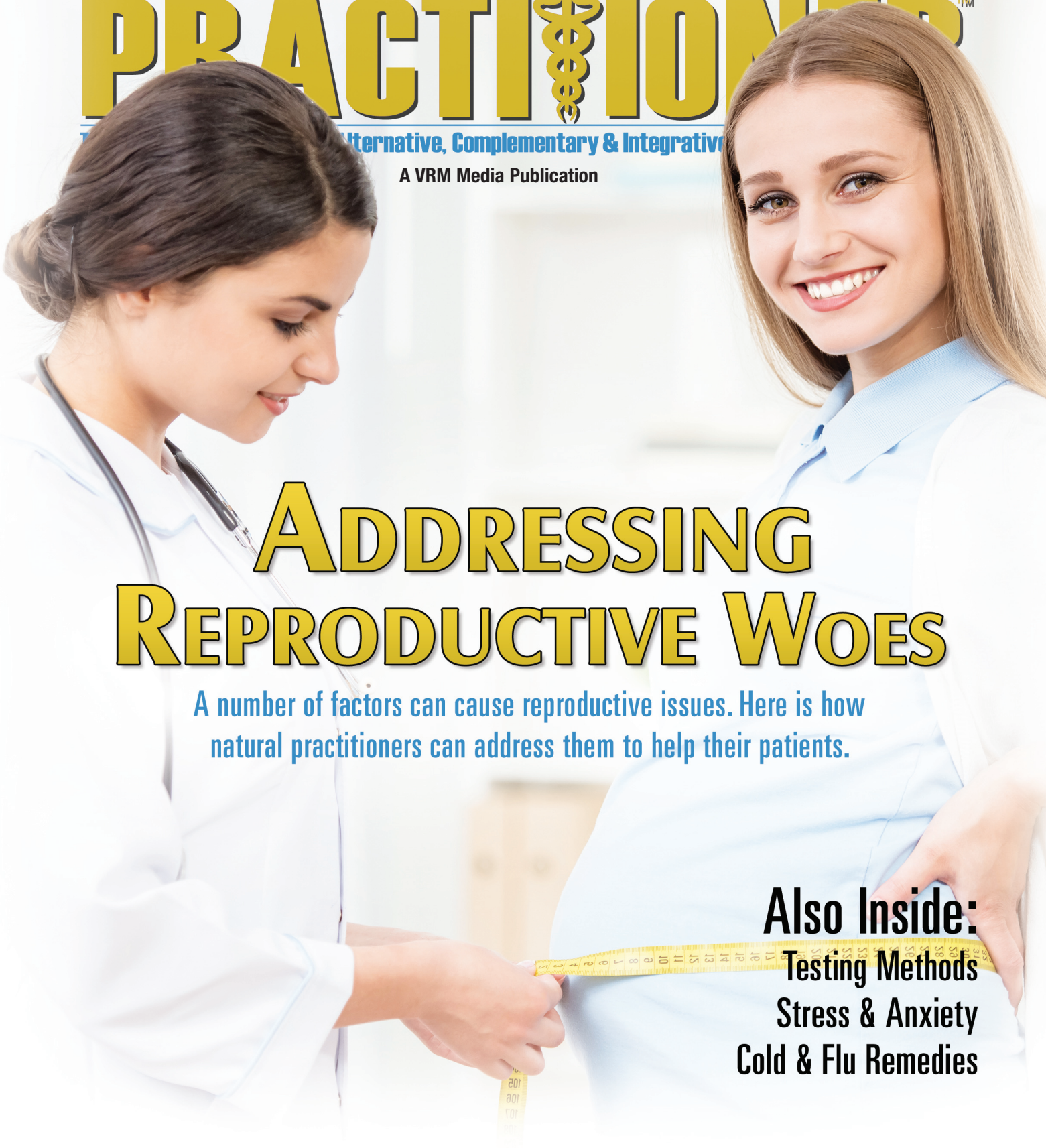
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# NATURAL PRACTITIONER



Alternative, Complementary & Integrative

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## ADDRESSING REPRODUCTIVE WOES

A number of factors can cause reproductive issues. Here is how natural practitioners can address them to help their patients.

**Also Inside:**  
Testing Methods  
Stress & Anxiety  
Cold & Flu Remedies



# TESTING INNOVATIONS

**So many testing methods are now available to help pinpoint your patient's particular health issue to get him or her back on the track to vibrant health and well-being. Here are some to consider.**

**By Lisa Schofield**

The majority of people are dealing with any number of health issues, and if they are indeed in general good health, they can frequently feel “off” or encounter new conditions that are generated, such as depression, psoriasis, digestive issues, more frequent colds, etc. And in today’s modern world of frenetic lifestyles, nobody wants to be sidelined by issues or have to take forced time outs.

And compounding the ability to hone in on the cause of the issue is the individual’s unique manner of expression of his/her symptoms, which can vary dramatically from another who has the same issue.

But this is where the growing number of more sophisticated testing protocols come in. Quite a few are so sensitive they add to accuracy that helps you create a more exacting protocol to regain that healthy balance.

“It seems our modern day environment and lifestyle contributes heavily to almost every clinical presentation I see, whether that be fatigue, hormone imbalances, autoimmune issues, etcetera,” observed Holly Lucille, ND.

She related that selecting and utilizing a testing method is based on the clinical case

and the individual; she “goes way beyond” reference range testing, preferring instead to use functional medicine testing and environmental medicine testing along with genetic testing, which she asserted yields her many more answers. “I tend to use Genova Diagnostics for their vast variety of tests and Labrix for other options,” she said.

For example, she elaborated, if she has a patient with cardiovascular issues and his/her homocystiene is high, she prefers to ensure the individual doesn’t have an MTHFR variant, which would decrease the body’s ability to methylate and process folic acid. This is the same with depression and fatigue.

“With autoimmune issues, I am keen on getting to the root because the immune system is mostly in the gut, so I like to do a microbiome assessment, sIgA and other markers like calprotectin if there is any deep digestive issues. With hormone-related issues, I like to assess estrogen metabolism through the liver. With more difficult patients, I will do a large panel assessing antioxidant and nutrient status, and detoxification markers along with heavy metals.”

A unique perspective is offered by **Jacob Teitelbaum, MD**, who said that there are very

few testing protocols he likes to use, as he doesn’t find many of them to be adequately reliable. However, he stressed, “they do offer an important piece of data, but this information must be interpreted in the context of the person’s history, signs and symptoms. Sadly, most physicians have utterly lost faith in their skills in the art of medicine, hoping instead that seeing a lab result printed in black and white will give them absolute assurance. It does, but often gives them complete assurance while they are following a false trail.”

Because of this, Dr. Teitelbaum emphasized, it is important that practitioners research and review the lab testing they use.

## Testing Innovations

Many newer testing protocol companies are founded upon compelling new health research, increasing overall sophistication for today’s natural practitioners.

Currently, Colorado-based DNA Connexions provides four tests that address different but increasingly common health issues. These are: Full View Assay to test oral samples for bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites; Lyme Panel, a direct test targeting *Borrelia burgdorferi* (the causative agent of

# TESTING INNOVATIONS

Lyme disease) and 10 common tick borne co-infectors; Apolipoprotein E (ApoE) Genotyping, determining which genotype of the ApoE gene is expressed in an individual, and which is linked to Alzheimer's, cholesterol levels, and other health issues; and gluten intolerance/sensitivity, discerning the HLA-DQ gene markers most frequently found in celiac disease.

According to Leslie Douglas, PhD, lead researcher/laboratory manager, the company's founder, Dr. Hal Huggins, was a leading pioneer in identifying and treating medical problems caused by harmful dental procedures. Research has revealed that standard dental practices, such as root canals, have been linked to many unexplained health issues and DNA Connexions was created to discern which microbes are found in samples from root canals, cavitations, implants and other oral samples. The company's Full View

Panel tests for 88 bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites from a variety of oral samples with intent to detect which microbes might be targeted for therapy. "Those who have developed inexplicable illnesses may find the source to be poor dental work," said Dr. Douglas. "We recommend the Full View panel for patients who have root canals, implants, and/or cavitations, which are infections in the jawbone where teeth have been extracted. The resulting toxins can negatively affect the body and the cause can be difficult to pinpoint."

Although the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) says that each year, approximately 300,000 people are diagnosed with Lyme disease in the United States, "we believe this is a gross underreporting as there are limitations on data collection, and not every case is submitted to the CDC," said Dr. Douglas. Sometimes, Western Blot or ELISA tests are inconclusive, and there isn't a tremendous amount of credible information available to the general public, and those who may be wondering if what they are feeling can indeed be Lyme disease, he noted.

"As Lyme is a multi-tissue, multi-organ, and multi-system disease, it is difficult to diagnose. Symptoms mimic other diseases and is often passed over as a possible cause," he observed. While there are several tests available, DNA Connexions, he asserted, is

the only one to test for *Borrelia burgdorferi* and 10 additional tick-borne co-infections, and the test targets the presence of the organism in the submitted sample rather than the patient immune response to the infection. "We are able to provide positive tests that have otherwise been reported as negative by other means," he said.

Another growing concern is gluten. More and more people are identifying as being gluten sensitive thanks largely to mass media education efforts. They will often visit natural practitioners to ascertain where along the gluten-problem line they lie. "Gluten intolerance and celiac disease are more commonly detected as individu-

als are experiencing some level of intolerance," said Dr. Douglas. "Our assay looks at the gene responsible for processing gluten which is 95 percent predictive for gluten intolerance and/or sensitivity and also for celiac disease."

Another more universal condition that causes many visits stems from aging, according to Yessica Fernandez-Cruz, sales and marketing director, Life Length, Madrid, Spain. She observed that populations in every country are increasing in the number and proportion of older people. "This is going to be one of the most significant social transformations of the 21st century, with implications for nearly all sectors of society," she asserted.

For example, she provided, the population of Americans age 65 and older is expected to double in the next 25 years due to increased life expectancy. The number of people aged 80 years or over is expected to increase from 14 percent in 2015 to more than 20 percent in 2050. The anticipated growth in the aging population will result in an expected 25 percent rise in health care costs by 2030.

According to data from World Population Prospects: the 2015 Revision (United Nations, 2015), the number of older persons—those aged 60 years or over—has increased substantially in recent years in most countries and regions, and that growth is projected to accelerate in the coming decades. Between 2015 and 2030, the number of people in the world aged 60 years or over is projected to grow by 56 percent, from 901 million to 1.4 billion.

"The health of the aging population can be preserved and chronic diseases can be reduced," she stated. "Telomere measurement provides information about an individual's aging process and is a crucial biomarker that serves as a key tool in preventive medicine so we can take preventive measures to postpone aging and thus the onset of age-related diseases."

Unhealthy cholesterol profiles and Alzheimer's disease are two age-related conditions numerous people are extremely concerned about developing and want to prevent the risk. The ApoE gene in humans codes for a protein that helps maintain normal levels of cholesterol, mercury removal, and has also been linked to an increased risk of late-onset Alzheimer's disease. DNA Connexions' Apolipoprotein E (ApoE) Genotyping tests for all the genotypes possible, noted Dr. Douglas.

## How They Work

"New advances in science have made it possible for individuals to gain information about their unique genetic makeup—and there is a growing trend of consumers seeking to understand their personalized genetic code," said Ed Coffey, director of operations for Massachusetts-based ORIG3N. LIFEPROFILE

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allows individuals and their practitioners to learn how their genes impact specific aspects of their bodies and their health, he explained. "With our FUEL, individuals can learn exactly how their genes affect their nutritional tendencies, weight and overall health. FUEL tests 24 genes related to nutrition. The assessment report will provide insights on how one's body responds to various nutritional and weight categories. It also includes statistics on how the individual compares to the general population," he described. "All results are based upon peer-reviewed scientific literature and include references to the original research," Coffey added.

FUEL builds off of ORIG3N's LIFEPRO-FILE series, which includes personal genetic testing kits AURA, FITCODE and SUPER-HERO. Each test is performed via a simple cheek swab, from which DNA is extracted for genetic analysis using industry-standard instrumentation, according to Coffey, which can be mailed to its lab. Results take a few weeks.

"We test genes related to processing seven vitamins, a deficiency in any may cause multiple symptoms," he explained. "We test seven genes relating to hunger and weight gain covering such attributes as feeling full, appetite control, food reward and sweet tooth. We test seven genes relating to food sensitivities for such things as lactose, caffeine, alcohol and bitter foods. And we test three genes relating to cholesterol levels."

DNA Connexions provides comprehensive kits for all of its accepted sampling methods, including instructions, all necessary sampling equipment and a box to ship the collected sample to the company, according to Dr. Douglas. All of DNA Connexions' tests utilize PCR (polymerase chain reaction) in which specific genes are targeted and amplified to detectable amounts. The primers we use to target these genes are highly specific and accuracy is confirmed by DNA Sequence data and the NCBI Genbank B.L.A.S.T. database. Each report lists what was found in the sam-

ple along with applicable information for that test. The practitioner is the able to made decisions about further treatment or therapy.

Life Length, said Fernandez-Cruz, offers a unique test that measures the percentage of critically short telomeres (the telomeres that have become so short that normal cellular division is impaired), "Which allows us with great precision to estimate the degree of telomere shortening of a given individual. There is solid genetic evidence that telomere length and in particular the abundance of 'critically short' telomeres (those telomeres which represent a persistent damage to the cell) are relevant for aging and the development of age-associated diseases. In contrast, other habits (exercise, meditation, nutritional supplements) have been shown to improve telomere maintenance with age."

The kits are used to achieve three objectives for your clients/patients, Fernandez-Cruz pointed out:

1. To provide people with an excellent indicator of their overall general health status as reflected through their percentage of short telomeres and ultimately becoming a test routinely performed in every check-up.

2. To provide an estimation of an individual's biological age through the interpretation of the percentage of short telomeres found in their blood as the best surrogate for the overall organism.

3. "To contribute to the growing concept of personalized medicine by allowing practitioners to provide care that is based on their patients' aging process, warranting closer care of individuals who are biologically older than their chronological age and possibly reducing the number of other tests and costs for people who are biologically younger," she explained.

Fernandez-Cruz added that telomere measurement is the new tool for understanding a person's aging process, thus potentially lowering risk for the development of age-related diseases. "If telomeres are very short, we know we are looking at a patient at risk and we need to do a deeper screening to see what dis-

eases he/she is at higher risk of contracting to make the corresponding interventions," she described.

Other tests for consideration include: Salica testing from Diagnos Techs; GPL-Tox, a new test for toxic organic chemical exposure and GPL-SNP1000, a genetic test to find alterations in the genetic code in the nine key pathways, from The Great Plains Laboratory; advanced urinary hormone testing from Physicians Lab; IT inflammation testing from Cleveland HeartLab; and food inflammation testing (Delayed Food Sensitivity) from KBMO Diagnostics.

"Data is amazing!" expressed Dr. Lucille. "Natural practitioners can usually get folks on the road to healing with dietary and lifestyle interventions, but testing, especially when someone isn't responding to therapies, is a must. I always say if you start to scratch your head and what usually works isn't, don't guess, test!" 🩺

■ Research has revealed that standard dental practices, such as root canals, have been linked to many unexplained health issues.

■ CDC says that each year, approximately 300,000 people are diagnosed with Lyme disease in the United States, but there may be many more.

■ Lyme is a multi-tissue, multi-organ, and multi-system disease it is difficult to diagnose. Symptoms mimic other diseases and is often passed over as a possible cause.

■ Gluten intolerance and celiac disease are more commonly detected as individuals are experiencing some level of intolerance.

■ Populations in every country are increasing in the number and proportion of older people.

■ The number of Americans age 65 and older is expected to double in the next 25 years due to increased life expectancy.

■ Telomere measurement provides information about an individual's aging process and is a crucial biomarker that serves as a key tool in preventive medicine.

■ New advances in science have made it possible for individuals to gain information about their unique genetic makeup.

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