Primary hormones (in CAPS) are made by organs by taking up cholesterol * and converting it locally to, for example, progesterone. Much less is made from circulating precursors like pregnenolone. For example, taking DHEA can create testosterone and estrogen, but far less than is made by the testes or ovaries, respectively.

Other factors affecting the production of primary reproductive and adrenal hormones:

- **Increased Cortisol:** stress, inflammation, Cushing’s Disease, obesity
- **Decreased Cortisol:** glucocorticoid use, opioid use, Addison’s Disease, Accutane, chronic marijuana use
- **Increased DHEA:** PCOS, acute stress, Bupropion (Wellbutrin), Alprazolam (Xanax), ADD meds
- **Decreased DHEA:** aging, rapid weight loss, Venlafaxine/Mirtazapine, opioids, glutocorticoids, hormonal birth control, antipsychotic meds, estrogens, diabetes meds
- **Increased Testosterone:** PCOS, HCG, HGH, L-Dopa, Climiphene Citrate (Clomid)
- **Decreased Testosterone:** obesity, opioids, hormonal birth control, acute illness, aging, high insulin, steroid use
- **Increased Estrogens:** PCOS, inflammation, pregnancy, DHEA/testosterone supplementation
- **Decreased Estrogens:** hormonal birth control, ovarian failure (menopause), opioids, anorexia, underweight
- **Increased Progesterone:** pregnancy, pregnenolone supplementation (increases urine progesterone metabolites, not actual circulating progesterone), Vitex (chasteberry tree berry)
- **Decreased Progesterone:** hormonal birth control, stress, high insulin, opioids, NSAID use > 10 days, anovulation, luteal phase defect, high prolactin, underweight, hypothyroid, hormonal IUD (Mirena)

Information on this chart is for educational purposes only and is not a suggestion for supplementation with any of the listed items. References available upon request.