DHEA COMPOSITIONS FOR TREATING ~~MENOPOSE~~ MENOPAUSE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[001]. The present invention provides novel ways of administering and dosing dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) in order to take advantage of positive androgenic effects (for example in the vaginal layers lamina propia and/or the layer muscularis), without undesirably causing systemic estrogenic effects. In addition to DHEA, other sex steroid precursors may be used (*e.g.*, dehydroepiandrosterone-sulfate, androst-5-ene-3β,17β-diol, and 4-androstene-3,17-dione).

BACKGROUND OF THE RELATED ART

[002]. Many hormone-related therapies are known. For example, many provide the sex steroids estrogen or androgen systemically and/or to target tissue. In addition to direct administration of androgens and/or estrogens, sex steroid precursors that can be converted to estrogen and/or androgen in a given tissue have also been used for many conditions. Both androgens and estrogens can be beneficial in some contexts and detrimental in others. That depends *inter alia* on the tissue being targeted, the specific needs presented by a patient, and the extent to which non-targeted tissue may be affected. Some therapies, though targeted, can still have undesirable activity elsewhere in the body (e.g. where local administration of the pharmaceutical agent nonetheless results in increased systemic presence of either the pharmaceutical or one of its metabolites. Also, the mechanism of action has not always been fully understood, especially the relative contributions of androgens and estrogens.