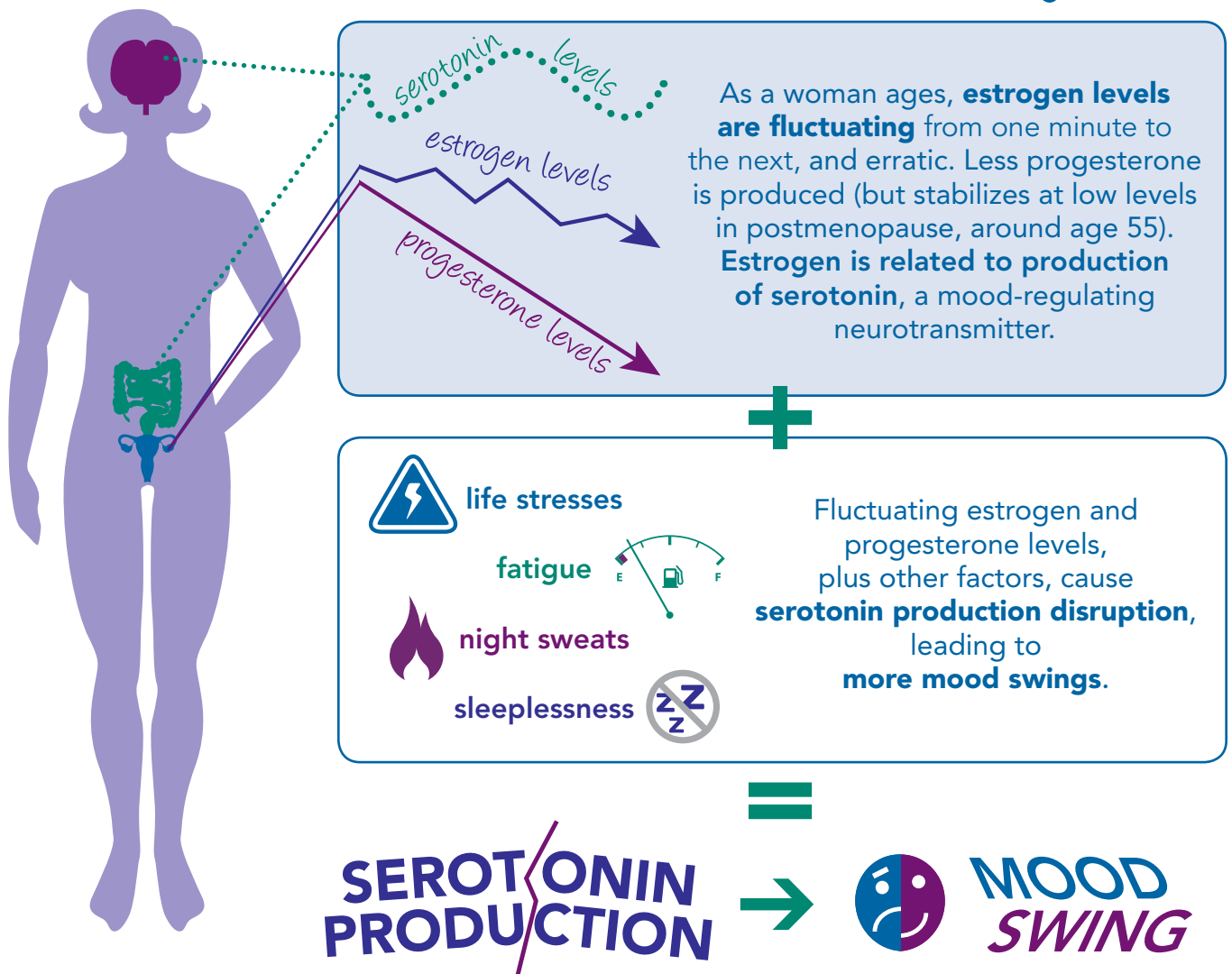


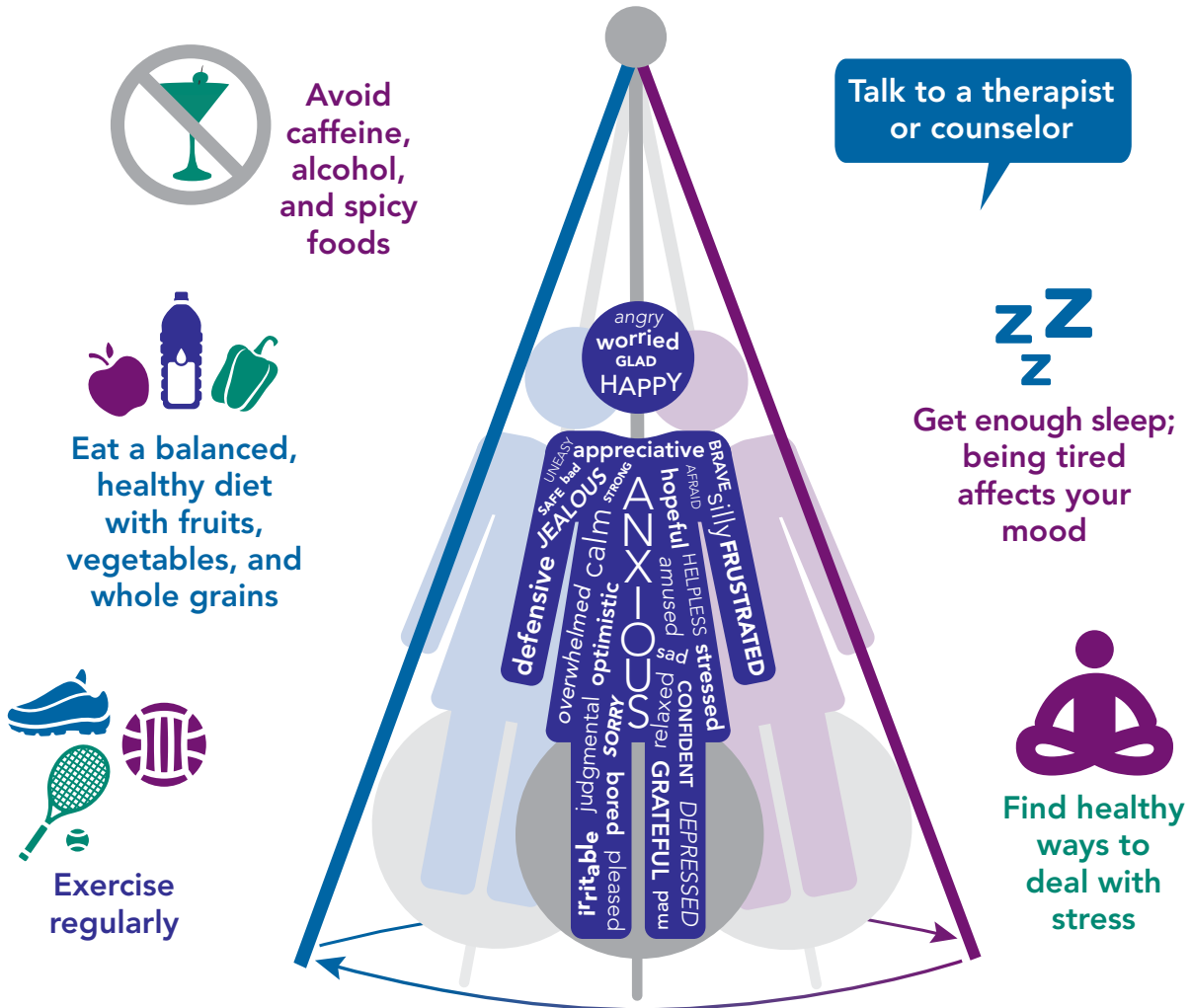
# THE ANATOMY OF A MOOD SWING

You're laughing with your friends one minute and close to tears a few moments later. You feel tired, overwhelmed, and out of control. You're not crazy—it's one of the common symptoms of perimenopause (the first stage of menopause, usually in the early 40s): **mood swings**. And there are ways to cope. Visit [hormone.org](http://hormone.org) and [menopausemap.org](http://menopausemap.org) for more information.

## What causes mood swings?



# Dealing with symptoms of mood swings



- **Hormone therapy:** May help severe mood swings; usually lowest dose for shortest amount of time prescribed (there is no increased risk of breast cancer until after three years of therapy; very few women use therapy for any longer)
- **SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors):** Can be effective in treating mood swings and other symptoms, such as hot flashes and sleep issues, but have side effects; some doctors suggest effectiveness is increased when a woman is first treated with estrogen
- **Complementary alternative medicines (CAM)** such as black cohosh, deep breathing, and soy in some cases; includes treatments such as acupuncture and mind-body therapies such as yoga, tai chi and meditation
- **Low dose birth control pills:** Shuts down the ovarian fluctuation that takes place during perimenopause; offers a fixed dose of estrogen and progesterin every day



**Always talk with your health care provider about medications, hormone therapy, and before using CAM supplements.**

## You have questions. We have answers.

The Hormone Health Network is your trusted source for endocrine patient education. Our free, online resources are available at [hormone.org](http://hormone.org).

Additional editing by Mary Jane Minkin, MD, Yale Medical School