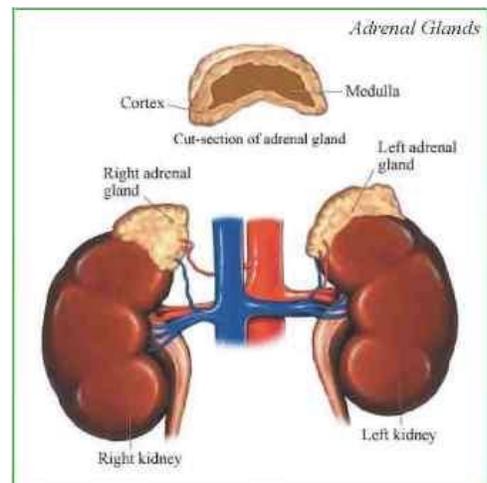




ARE YOUR ADRENALS IN TROUBLE? [PART 1]

Are Your Adrenals in Trouble?

Adrenals are walnut sized glands that sit on top of the kidneys. They are important endocrine glands which produce and distribute 50 different hormones. Adrenal imbalances are usually associated with chronic stress. When your body has to continuously deal with tension, the adrenals are called upon to produce adrenaline and cortisol, not just to deal with a flight-or-flight situation which lasts for a moment, but almost continually, 24 hours a day. The normal stress response is intended to be a short-term reaction with a fairly quick return to a relaxed baseline. Unfortunately in the 21st century, our adrenals don't know the difference between a true emergency and the stress from a traffic jam. When cortisol levels stay unnaturally high over periods of time, a person can start to experience a wide range of distressing symptoms, which can ultimately lead to serious health problems.



Jing Energy

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Adrenals are also the seat of our Jing energy or Primal Essence. This is our long-term “battery pack” of energy that determines how long we live. When we run out of Jing, we run out of life force, and so it is crucial to safeguard and nourish our adrenal energy. Most people these days seem to be burning the candle at both ends, burning through their Jing and burning themselves out. This is a dangerous situation to find

yourself in and to make matters worse, often the thing that people turn to for help is a stimulant of some sort—an energy drink with caffeine, guarana, sugar, or some other substance which actually depletes the adrenals even more. As the seat of Jing, adrenal health is directly correlated to longevity.

Eventually, the adrenals become overtaxed, and struggle to produce cortisol, as well DHEA, estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. This reduction in key hormones becomes especially serious as a woman nears the age of menopause when she needs the full support of her adrenals to prevent extreme hormone imbalances. Many women as they approach and go through menopause find themselves with reduced adrenal function and many unpleasant symptoms.

What kinds of lifestyle choices contribute to adrenal imbalance?

- Insufficient sleep
- Unhealthy dieting
- Relationship drama
- Over use of stimulants such as caffeine and sugar
- Excessive exercise
- Illness, surgery, health challenges
- Post-traumatic stress
- Overwhelming responsibilities

Do you wake up in the morning, feeling tired until you get your caffeine? Do you require snacks in the afternoon to get through the day? Are alcohol or sleep aids part of your regular regimen to help you unwind? Are your normal sleep patterns disrupted, leading to a vicious cycle of exhaustion?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions and you are wondering if you could be suffering with reduced adrenal function, see if any of these symptoms apply to you:

- Overall fatigue and weakness
- Disrupted sleep patterns
- Moodiness, anxiety, irritability, or depression
- Insulin resistance
- Muscle and bone loss
- Skin problems
- Thinning hair
- Depleted immune system
- Autoimmune disorders
- Increased number of allergies and chemical sensitivities
- Weight gain
- Reduced libido
- Craving for sweets and salty foods
- Inability to cope with stress
- Low back pain around the kidneys

Is There a Test for Adrenal Fatigue?

Adrenal imbalance can lead to other serious health conditions including fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, thyroid imbalance, arthritis, and depression. Unfortunately, the tests that you may get in a doctor's office only detect extreme imbalances for things like Addison's disease or Cushing's syndrome. If you are on the spectrum of adrenal fatigue, heading for danger but not yet arrived, your doctor will probably tell you that your levels are in the "normal" range, when in fact your adrenal function is already compromised. Ask your doctor to measure cortisol and DHEA levels because these are better indicators of adrenal imbalance due to stress; however, remember that the best indicator that something is not right is your own knowing that you feel unwell.

The Consequences of High Cortisol

Chronically high cortisol interferes with digestion, limits our ability to sleep well, depresses immune function, and affects the body's ability to produce other essential hormones (DHEA, testosterone, estrogen, progesterone, and thyroid hormone). Over time, relentless pressure on the adrenals to produce cortisol constantly contributes to high blood sugar, excess abdominal fat, high blood pressure, and overall inflammation. Moreover, it affects DHEA production, which in turn compromises immunity, bone health, mood, and libido.

The more the adrenal glands are compromised, the harder it becomes for them to make cortisol. To compensate, extra adrenalin is produced, which has the effect of making us irritable and shaky. Exhausted adrenals can cause anxiety, low blood sugar, low blood pressure, inability to concentrate, lightheadedness on standing, and allergies. Now we are heading in the direction of a serious condition.

The Natural Solution

The good news is that adrenal exhaustion can be healed. The bad news is it can take a long time. Each person who finds themselves dealing with adrenal fatigue is unique, and so remedies should be considered on a case-by-case basis. A plan to balance hormones and improve dietary habits is crucial for reducing physical stress on the adrenals and to help the body recover from adrenal fatigue. With changes in stress management patterns, dietary, and lifestyle changes (what you eat and when you eat it), you CAN rebuild your adrenals.