



### Tips for Avoiding Adrenal Burnout: Prevention is Better than Cure

When you eat is important and it's also critical to think about what you eat. Naturally, cortisol is at its highest level around 8:00 in the morning and gradually declines through the day, except for small bumps around meal time. Cortisol is lower in the evening, allowing the body rest at night. Time your meals and snacks so that you never get too hungry. Low blood sugar and long periods of time without food produce a stress reaction in the body which can tax the adrenals.

In order to avoid dramatic fluctuations in cortisol levels throughout the day, eat your biggest meal early so that you can eat only lightly and early in the evening. If you eat too much, too close to bedtime, it will trigger your body to release too many hormones and you will also likely choose foods which are higher in sugar and fat. Modify your meal patterns this way to mimic the natural (optimal) cycle of cortisol working along with your circadian rhythms.

Note that cortisol also rises with exercise. Light activities, such as an evening walk or some gentle yoga, will not interrupt the natural tapering-off process, but heavy exercise too late in the day will cause more stress on the adrenals.



If you're one of the many people who don't feel hungry in the morning, so you don't have a desire for a big meal then, see if any of the following apply to you:

- You have a big meal late in the evening and haven't burned off the calories. Try not eating after 6pm and you will likely be more ready for food when you wake up.
- If you have decreased liver function, know that a heavy toxic burden impairs adrenal function and dampens morning hunger. Try sipping a glass of warm water with lemon and MSM first thing in the morning to support liver health and stimulate the body's digestive juices.

Even if you don't feel very hungry, try eating a nutritious breakfast not later than 10:00am—preferably one which includes all the macronutrients: protein, fat, and a small amount of complex carbs. This will support healthy metabolism and balanced cortisol levels through the day.

### How to Eat to Regain Your Adrenal Health



People with adrenal fatigue often find themselves reaching for quick energy by grabbing convenience foods, usually that have a lot of sugar: cookies, donuts, bread, coffee, and soda. When the body encounters low blood sugar, it naturally craves sugar as an instant pick-me-up, but this habit further drains the body, leaches important minerals, and causes an ever bigger dip in energy later on. The quick

spike of blood sugar, followed by a spike of insulin that sugar brings, sets up the pattern of a vicious cycle that leads to additional more serious health issues—so avoiding too many simple carbs overall is a good rule of thumb.

Keep away from all deep fried foods, processed meats and cheese. Removing caffeine from the diet altogether can help bring more balance to the adrenals. Anything that has a stimulating effect, even if it is natural, can delay the adrenals ability to repair because the stimulant asks the adrenals to work harder and produce more when they really just need to rest and rejuvenate. Honor your body's need to take a break instead of pushing through it and you will be doing yourself a favor in the long term.

Avoid wheat and gluten. These are common offenders, often causing sensitivities and digestive problems. Steer clear from alcohol because it is a concentrated sugar and depresses the immune system. Try a calming herbal tea instead—chamomile, passionflower, or valerian. If you are on a raw food diet, you may want to introduce more warming foods and herbs to nourish the adrenals. A diet of cooling foods will make it harder to recover quickly. Root vegetables are a good choice for complex carbohydrates.



Avoid soy, another common food allergen and hormone disruptor. Enjoy fruit in small portions only. Fruit juices contain too much sugar and often also have some mold. Add green powders and green vegetables to smoothies and add a tablespoon or two of coconut or olive oil as well. Avoid tap water and try to find the best quality spring water you can in your area.

When you are recovering from adrenal stress, it is not the time to go on a weight loss diet. Eat regular meals and snacks when needed to keep your blood sugar even. If you are dealing with candida or parasites, you may want to address that issue first and get it under control, then start to rebuild the adrenals. Your program will be more effective when your gut is better able to absorb nutrients properly.

In general, focus on fresh, whole foods with as little processing as possible. Organic foods, locally grown, provide less toxic load on the body. Include protein with every meal (especially breakfast), but don't overdo animal proteins as this causes additional stress on the kidneys.

If you don't have time during the week to prepare nutritious meals, try making extra on the weekends to have meals readily available during the week and you don't end up relying on restaurant food when you are too tired after work to cook.

If for some reason you do go off the plan and end up eating less than optimally, just rededicate yourself to self-care and move forward. Stressing about unhealthy choices is also an unhealthy choice so just do the best you can to take care of yourself ongoing.

### **Supplements Can Help**

If your adrenals are compromised, they need to receive the building blocks to repair themselves by changes in lifestyle and by receiving an adequate supply of helpful nutrients. Supplemental herbs, vitamins, and minerals can make a world of difference and shorten recovery time significantly.

One of the best herbs for kidney/adrenal health is the Chinese herb, rehmannia. Rehmannia (Radix Rehmanniae) is a blood and kidney yin tonic which is extensively used in Traditional Chinese Medicine. It is known to strengthen the kidneys and the adrenals and tonify the blood. This replenishing herb helps to balance the yin and yang of the kidney. If you are experiencing low back pain, weakness in the knees or legs, this can be a sign of depleted Jing or weak adrenal energy and Chinese herbs are some of the best substances you can use to replenish and rebalance this energy.

Rehmannia can be effective for reducing inflammation. It also contains multiple naturally-occurring vitamins, giving it added value. Studies have demonstrated rehmannia's ability to support the cells of the pituitary gland and adrenal cortex in stressful times and to help autoimmune conditions of the thyroid and adrenal glands. It is an herb that is not recommended to take by itself and so it is often sold as an ingredient in a multi-herb formula. [www.LongevityWarehouse.com](http://www.LongevityWarehouse.com) has a delicious tea mix, using rehmannia as the main ingredient and other supporting herbs to benefit adrenal health. [LINK HERE](#)

Tonic herbs can be used to modulate adrenal secretion and increase the body's ability to respond to stress. Adaptogenic herbs have innate wisdom to respond to the specific needs of your body. These are safe to use because they will not overstimulate the body and will support the natural healing process. Some of the best choices for tonics/adaptogens include rhodiola, ashwagandha, maca, astragalus, schizandra, cordyceps, and eleuthero.

Astragalus is both a tonic and an adrenal support herb, typically used in combination with other herbs, especially rehmannia and eleuthero which boosts energy. Gingko is helpful for enhanced blood flow and antioxidant protection. Ashwagandha supports the rebuilding of the inner core for strength, endurance, and libido. Korean Ginseng is great for supporting adrenal and thyroid function. Rhodiola may help by improving mood, libido, and mental clarity.

B vitamins also play a crucial role in the production of stress hormones. Supplementing with B vitamins is necessary, especially for vegetarians who have a harder time recovering from adrenal fatigue. Vitamins C, E, and niacin are also important. Make sure your Vitamin D levels are above average. Minerals like magnesium, zinc, selenium and iodine plus trace minerals help the body stay calm and relieve stress, helping to restore normal cortisol levels.

## **Salt and adrenal imbalance**

We are often told to avoid salt but people with adrenal issues often crave salt. Low blood pressure is a common sign of adrenal insufficiency. If you feel lightheaded when you stand up too quickly or when you get out of a hot bath, you may have compromised adrenal function. You do need to include salt in your diet but make sure it is a healthy salt such as Celtic salt, Himalayan salt, Bamboo salt, or kelp powder, and never processed iodized salt. If you do have low blood pressure, increasing it naturally is not a bad idea.

## **Stress Relief**

We all know the devastating effect of stress on overall wellness. Stress depletes the immune system, leaving the body susceptible to intensified effects of infection and allergies, and allowing chronic autoimmune conditions to take over.

If you suffer from reduced adrenal function it's critical to learn how to reduce stress. The method to achieve this will vary person to person, but common activities that many individuals enjoy are light to moderate exercise, yoga, meditation, guided imagery, tai chi, qi gong, and adequate sleep (7-9 hours or more a night) etc. If the cause of stress is an emotional issue such as marital or financial problems, these things need to be understood and given attention.

Vigorous exercise depletes adrenals. Fasting and other forms of detox also stress the adrenals. A juice cleanse now would not be helpful. Rebuild your adrenals first, then juice and detox when you are feeling stronger. Try to replace dangerous household chemicals with gentler more environmental options.

## **Start Now Before It's Too Late**

Adrenal fatigue is a "waiting room" of sorts for other problems: type-2 diabetes, hypothyroidism, and heart conditions, and is a strong indicator of overall decreasing health. The body's exhaustion affects its ability to respond to signals from the brain and other glands, contributing to a wide range of additional problems.

Remember, it took a lot of ongoing stress to reach the point of adrenal fatigue, and so the problem will not be resolved overnight. Following the recommendations above will give some relief in a month or two but it will take some time for the body to rebuild itself so stick with the program and give yourself every opportunity to recover rather than drag yourself lower into exhaustion again.

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