



THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Adrenal Gland Support

“ Impaired adrenal function can be an underlying cause of chronic fatigue, dizziness, depression, apprehension, anxiety, auto-immune disease, inability to concentrate, inability to hold adjustments.”

People talk about getting an "adrenaline rush." That's when adrenaline is being pumped into your bloodstream under extreme circumstances giving you an energized sensation. You've heard of people being referred to as "adrenaline junkies."

The adrenal glands are the triangular shaped glands that sit on top of the kidneys. They release hormones into the body as a response to stress. Stress can take many forms: taking an examination, recovering from a broken bone, a challenging sport or activity, the presence of danger, trying to survive a difficult situation, or just maintaining proper levels of energy when faced with even mild starvation.

Adrenaline is good thing. But if any kind of stressful situation becomes prolonged, the adrenal glands



can become over stimulated; and we experience adrenal fatigue. Weak adrenal glands can affect other areas of the body as well.

Dr. Alex Zarkin has linked impaired adrenal function as one of the underlying causes with thyroid problems. He says that when the adrenals are over-stimulated the body will try to compensate via the hypothalamus-pituitary axis and ultimately affects the thyroid. In other words,

it's like the brakes are being applied to the thyroid. That's why some patients are given thyroid medication or supplementation and feel great for a few months or even years but ultimately the symptoms they experienced will return to their prior hypothyroid status.

Recently, a friend of mine who is also a naturopath was sharing his effectiveness with Hashimoto's thyroiditis. Hashimoto's thyroiditis is a condition

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where a person's antibodies, which are a type of white blood cell, attack the thyroid. He told me one of the main things he does to address this condition is to support the adrenal glands.

We all recognize that people are under more emotional, physical, and mental pressures than we can imagine. Listen close to conversations wherever you go; people are talking about being overwhelmed, exhausted, stretched to their limits, pushed at work, and relationships are strained. Remember stress comes in the form of chemical stress, mechanical stress, thermal stress, and emotional stress.



Stress has a powerful effect on hormones. It can increase cortisol and catecholamines, even decrease sex hormones. Stress has also been linked to reductions in pituitary hormones. The list of symptoms or conditions frequently associated with impaired adrenal function is too long to list. They range from dizziness to depression, apprehension to auto-immune disease, inability to concentrate to the inability to hold adjustments.

Your wellness clinician has methods to evaluate how your adrenal glands are functioning. They may start by giving you a brief questionnaire on specific adrenal indicators. If you score above a certain level, they may change your diet and

make general recommendations. However if the score is above a certain threshold, they will want to schedule you for a separate office visit to evaluate things like your pupil reflex or check to see if your blood pressure drops when you stand up from a lying down position.

Some tests are a little more expensive, but offer great levels of specificity and can bring tremendous clarity. They may collect urine, saliva or blood, to assess your adrenals. Some clinicians utilize what I call in-office tests. That's because you can do them in the office without sending them out to a laboratory. I love the in-office

tests because they are relatively inexpensive and can be used to assess where to start. Your progress can be evaluated over time by retesting. If your test levels aren't improving, we can alter the treatment program until they do.

Everyone is different and has unique biochemical individuality. The changes in your diet along with supplementation can be helpful to rebuild your organ reserve. Simple changes like eliminating sugar and refined carbohydrates can make a big difference in how you feel. For most people, the stresses in their lives are not going away soon. Those little adrenal glands need all the help they can get. Let's take care of them.