

Adrenal Fatigue

Stress - The Adrenal Enemy

By Jeannine Lee

Stress. We've heard the word over and over. Watch out for 'it'; it will kill you. But what exactly is 'it', and how does it impact your vitality?

Imagine that you sleep well, wake up refreshed and have all the energy you need to face the tasks of the day. You feel vital and alive. That is your birthright. But sometimes life gets in the way and in order to keep up with your life you need more go power. **Properly functioning adrenals supply you with the energy you need to meet life's demands,** but when they are not working properly you pay the energetic price. Continue to abuse them and your health can pay serious prices.

Anyone can develop this condition, even [Alfred E. Neuman](#).

Adrenal disorders may be the most common functional disorders found today. Our adrenal glands are nearly in crisis mode as our modern diets, which include high-carbs, synthetic sweeteners, artificial flavors, and synthetic food additives such as hydrogenated fats, place huge stresses on the body. Couple that with modern schedules of multi-tasking and deadlines and we have created optimum conditions for adrenal related disorders.

Causes of adrenal fatigue

- On-going anger, fear and guilt
- Chronic fatigue, illness or pain
- Infection (including parasitic and bacterial)
- Gluten intolerance and other food sensitivities
- Exposure to toxins
- Excessive exercise
- Too much sugar
- High caffeine intake
- Digestion problems
- Trauma from surgery or injury
- Sleep Deprivation
- Being on the go-go-go all the time
- Stress from moving, loss of a loved one, or your role as a caregiver

What are the adrenals, and how do they work?

The adrenal glands are two yellowish-brown, triangular-shaped glands which sit above the kidneys. They produce only a teaspoonful of hormone over a lifetime, but their balance is critical to vital health.

In times of stress the adrenal hormone output may increase to ten times their normal levels, increasing heart and breathing rates, elevating blood sugar and the blood's ability to clot. There are over forty hormones or hormone-like chemicals produced directly or indirectly by the adrenal glands — from influencing mineral levels to producing sex hormones.

Symptoms of adrenal fatigue

- Digestive problems
- Increased serum cholesterol
- Severe weight gain or loss
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Menstrual problems
- Sleep disturbances
- Decrease in sexual arousal
- Impotence
- Hair loss
- Increased urination
- Chronic nonspecific pain
- Sensitivity to symptoms
- Dark circles under the eyes
- Dizziness upon standing
- Poor immune modulation
- Brittle hair & nails
- Exhaustion
- Allergies
- Inability to calm down
- Panic attacks or anxiety
- Depression
- Blood sugar irregularities
- Sensitive to bright light
- Poor circulation

Everything on the planet is a stressor to the human body. **Stress is the cost of being alive.** The sun, the wind, interacting with other living organisms like pollens and other humans are all stressors. In modern society things as basic as the air we breathe, water we drink, and foods we consume add to the load. **It becomes dangerous when there are long periods of physical, environmental or emotional stressors greater than the body's ability to recover.** It's important to take care of those adrenal glands!

The adrenal stages in response to stress:

- **The alarm reaction:** This is the body's initial response to stress with the elevated metabolic rates mentioned above.
- **The resistance state:** This occurs with prolonged stresses. The adrenals adapt to prolonged stresses by going through what is called the "pregnenolone steal" phase. The body only has so much pregnenolone to go around and during times of stress the body will shift the available pregnenolone into producing the cortisol it needs rather than make the sex hormones such as estrogen and testosterone.
- **The alarm reaction:** This is the body's initial response to stress with the elevated metabolic rates mentioned above.
- **Exhaustion stage:** The adrenals are considered exhausted when they can no longer adapt to stress. This is a dangerous system failure.
- **Failure:** At this stage our bodies have a high chance of cardiovascular collapse and death.

Why live a life that has less than maximum vitality when some simple dietary and lifestyle changes can turn that around? If you don't have the energy you need to live a great life, check into [having an adrenal stress test performed](#) today!