



Adrenal Burnout

Healing the Effects of Long Term Stress

The adrenals are part of the endocrine or glandular system. These bean-shaped glands sit on top of the kidneys and produce a variety of hormones that regulate energy production, fluid balance, immune functions, and other important processes.

There are two parts to these glands. The adrenal cortex produces mineralocorticoids which regulate body fluids, glucocorticoids which mediate the effects of stress and suppress inflammation, and sex hormones, such as estrogen, progesterone and testosterone. The adrenal medulla produces epinephrine and norepinephrine, which help to regulate energy and help us deal with stress.

The adrenal glands help the body deal with stressful situations by adjusting the internal biological factors in response to external pressures. They create what is called the fight-or-flight response, the reaction we have when we are scared, startled, stressed, or worried. Adrenal hormones provide the energy we need to meet life's challenges. They also reduce inflammation and regulate fluid balance.

Constant stress, especially when coupled with poor nutrition, can deplete the adrenal glands, resulting in adrenal fatigue. In our modern society many people, feel under constant stress and pressure. Financial pressures, traffic jams, busy schedules and relationship problems all take their toll on the adrenals. Caffeine and sugar also tend to deplete the adrenal glands by overstimulating them. As a result, adrenal weakness is very common in modern society.

Severely depleted adrenals cause a person to feel tired, tense and exhausted, a "burned out" sensation. Specific symptoms of adrenal exhaustion include severe fatigue, difficulty relaxing or feeling peaceful, disturbing dreams and restless sleep patterns, nervousness, anxiety, heart palpitations and a sensation of pressure in the chest that is often interpreted as a cardiac problem. Persons suffering from adrenal fatigue will tend to have dark circles under their eyes, a quivering tongue and pulsing pupils in their eyes. Other symptoms include dryness, blood sugar imbalances, inflammation, difficulty breathing, tension headaches and excessive allergic reactions.

There is a class of herbal remedies that have been scientifically proven to help exhausted adrenals recover by mediating the effects of stress. Known as adaptagens, these herbs reduce the effects of stress by acting on signals from the hypothalamus and pituitary gland which trigger the production of stress hormones from the adrenal gland. By reducing the production of stress hormones from the adrenals, adaptagens giving the adre-

nal glands a much needed rest. Two of the very best adaptagens are eleuthero root and schizandra berries. Eleuthero (formerly known as Siberian ginseng) and schizandra berries have a calming effect on adrenal function and keep the adrenals from being overstimulated.

Suma is another herb shown to have adaptagenic properties. Suma has been called Brazilian ginseng because of its tonic properties. Suma Combination combines suma with eleuthero root, astragalus, ginkgo, and gotu kola. In combination, the herbs in Suma Combination reduce stress levels, enhance immune function and improve memory and concentration.

AdaptaMax is another valuable adaptagenic formula. It combines a variety of adaptagenic herbs including: Korean ginseng, eleuthero root, rhodiola, ashwaganda, gynostemma, schizandra, and suma. This formula can be used to reduce stress responses, enhance immunity, reduce oxidative damage, brighten moods and support the immune system.

Nervous Fatigue Formula is a valuable product for exhausted adrenals, chronic fatigue, restless sleep and chest pains brought on by anxiety and stress. According to Chinese tradition, it helps "calm the spirit," promotes deeper sleep, reduced stress levels, a calmer mind and more energy. It is particularly indicated for people who are tired after a long bout with stress but cannot sleep peacefully through the night.

There are also formulas that act directly to nourish depleted adrenal glands. One of these is NutriCalm, which provides vitamin C and B-complex vitamins vital for nervous and adrenal function. It is helpful for reducing anxiety levels, nervous tension and the tendency to overextend one's energy.

For severely depleted adrenals, there is Adrenal Support. Combining some of the same anti-stress vitamins found in Nutri-Calm with schizandra and other adrenal-supporting herbs and nutrients, Adrenal Support also contains adrenal tissue substance. It nourishes and rebuilds the adrenal tissue, as well as supporting adrenal function.

It is very important to avoid sugar and caffeine when recovering from stress and adrenal burn-out. Where caffeine and sugar cravings are a problem, licorice root can help. It supports adrenal function and stabilizes blood sugar levels and energy. Target Endurance can also be used to increase energy levels in people who crave sugar and caffeine.

With herbal and nutritional support, rest and good nutrition, it is possible to recover from adrenal burn-out. For more information talk to an herb specialist to help you develop the program that is right for you.

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