TAKE CONTROL OF ADRENAL FATIGUE!

Discover how Adrenal Fatigue could be causing your mood, hormone, digestive, or other health concerns.

Learn 5 things you can do about it, now!

Written By

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Welcome!

It’s time to get on the road to being the best you that you can possibly be.

If you want to become more clear-headed, focused, energized, positive, sexy, and alive, then you’re in for a treat. If lowering your stress and anxiety, and shedding stubborn weight gain sounds good to you, then this e-Book’s for you. If improved digestion and a better night’s sleep sounds like heaven to you, then read on!

Hi, I’m Brie Wieselman, Licensed Acupuncturist and specialist in Functional Integrative Medicine. As a medical professional, I’ve helped people with these types of chronic issues in my practice for over 10 years. These are the issues you talk to your doctor about and they just don’t have many explanations for you—or any good options for addressing them.

In my experience, the root cause of these and a host of other problems are caused by a syndrome know as Adrenal Fatigue. I’m here to break down for you the practical science behind Adrenal Fatigue and its connection to common chronic health symptoms like:

- **Digestive issues** ranging from minor gas and bloating to serious pathologies like Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn’s disease
- **Female and male hormonal imbalance**, responsible for hot flashes, night sweats, infertility, low sex drive and more
- **Psychological symptoms** such as depression, anxiety, brain-fog, and insomnia
- **Stubborn pounds** that just won’t budge no matter how you adjust your diet or how many hours you log at the gym
- **Fatigue** that can range from just low overall energy, to feeling like you can barely get out of bed in the morning
- **The seemingly endless stress** that makes you want to go after your husband with a frying pan

In the next few pages you’ll learn what Adrenal Fatigue is, how it feels, its relationship to stress, and how we get it. More importantly, I'll tell you 5 things that you can do about it—now!

Good health should be simple. By applying simple, straightforward solutions to Adrenal Fatigue we can start getting your body back in balance, and get you on the path to becoming A Better You!

To your most vibrant aliveness,

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# Take Control of Adrenal Fatigue

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Introduction:
Stress And Your Symptoms

It’s well established that all modern diseases and their symptoms are negatively impacted by chronic stress. From PMS, to susceptibility to the common cold, to an increased tendency to develop chronic diseases like cancer and diabetes, stress promotes the development and prevents healing of a multitude of health concerns. Unless you manage your stress, the impact it has on your physiology will override the benefits that diet and nutrition provide to healing your body.

But what exactly is happening?

What Is Adrenal Fatigue?

Adrenal Fatigue is not a disease. It’s a syndrome that occurs when the current level of Adrenal Gland function falls below the normal range. This produces a set of identifiable signs and symptoms.

Don’t be fooled. Just because it’s not a diagnosable “disease” doesn’t mean that it can’t have a profound affect on your wellness. In fact, Adrenal Fatigue is often an early-warning sign of increased vulnerability to a variety of diseases and conditions such as cancer, diabetes, depression, Alzheimer’s, autoimmune and thyroid disorders, and more. If diagnosed properly and addressed holistically, it can be an important preventative measure in avoiding these types of illnesses.

The good news is that Adrenal Fatigue is measurable and fixable. A trained professional can guide you through diet and lifestyle improvements, along with the strategic use of supplement and herbal protocols, to help get you back on the path to wellness.
How Adrenal Fatigue Feels

This is tricky. People with Adrenal Fatigue can live what appear to be normal lives, doing the things they have always done and may not have any obvious signs of severe physical illness. However, they typically have a general overall feeling of less than perfect wellness, general fatigue, or a kind of flat tone to their previously vibrant lives. These people often use mild stimulants like coffee to get themselves going in the morning, and keep themselves going throughout the day. In the more progressed cases, people can be so exhausted that it’s hard to get out of bed for more than a few hours per day.

Some Signs Of Adrenal Fatigue Include:

- An overreaction to perceived stressors—like the pressure of writing a school paper
- An increased susceptibility to colds, flus, and infections
- An inability to regulate blood sugar / having hypoglycemia symptoms between meals
- A Western diagnosis of almost being insulin resistant
- An extra 5 pounds of fat that you just can’t lose around your stomach, or 10+ that showed up out of nowhere and won’t budge no matter what you do
- Feeling frazzled to the point of road rage, getting easily frustrated or overwhelmed, snapping at your partner or kids, or crying for no particular reason
- Feeling fatigued, especially if you wake up wanting to go back to bed, or wanting to nap or snack between 3-5 pm—especially if you feel more alert and alive after 6 pm than you do all day
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Worsening PMS
- Nonexistent or decreased sex drive
- Easy bruising, more easily injured and don’t heal
- You notice aches and pains in joints and muscles
- You are more easily overwhelmed
- Lacking the same zest and drive for the things in life that used to drive you
- Want to exercise but just can’t push it as hard or you feel achy or fatigued later
- Low or high blood pressure
- You have difficulty bouncing back from stress or illness
- You crave salty and sweet snacks
What Are The Adrenal Glands?

The Adrenals sit on top of the kidneys, and are in charge of the production of various hormones that control blood pressure, metabolism of protein, fat, and carbs, as well as our response to perceived stressors. They are made up of two distinct layers: the Outer Adrenal Cortex and the Inner Adrenal Medulla. The Cortex secretes steroid hormones like cortisol and DHEA, sex hormones like progesterone and estrogen, and other hormones like aldosterone that regulate blood pressure. The Medulla is where we produce adrenaline and noradrenaline, which is part of the Sympathetic Nervous system, otherwise known as our “Fight-or-Flight” system.

Our primary stress hormone is Cortisol. Being called a stress hormone might sound bad, but we need cortisol in moderate levels to survive and maintain health. In addition to our Fight-or-Flight response, cortisol helps maintain balanced blood sugar levels, regulates our metabolism, counteracts inflammation, and sets our circadian rhythm (24-hour biological processes relative to day and night). Still, too much cortisol can be detrimental to our well-being.

How The Adrenal Glands Work

Let’s go back 1,000 years ago; you are planting a garden outside of your hut, when a hungry bear and her 3 cubs jump out of the forest. You know a hungry momma bear is not to be messed with. Your brain goes into “high alert” and you decide to run.

The shift into Fight-or-Flight mode occurs because your brain perceives some type of danger or stressor. In a big game of physiological telephone, stress registers in the brain, where your hypothalamus signals the pituitary, which then signals the adrenals. The adrenal release of hormones into the blood stream makes its way to the brain and this is the negative feedback loop that lets the hypothalamus and pituitary know the message has been received and the job performed. Depending on whether the brain is perceiving the level to be high enough to meet the demands of the stress, it will keep signaling the adrenals to produce more cortisol, or stop sending the hormonal signal so that the gland will know it has put out enough.

The stress response happens in 2 phases: First, we release catecholamines (adrenaline and noradrenaline) that prime your body to act immediately. Secondarily, these chemicals trigger a series of neurochemical processes that tell the adrenals, “It’s go time!” meaning, please make some cortisol. The cortisol’s main role here is to increase the heart rate and therefore blood flow to your arms and legs, for running. It also mobilizes glucose to fuel the action. The flood of cortisol helps to increase your breathing rate, initiate sweating, dilate pupils, and inhibits peristalsis in the digestive tract, to make sure our muscles have enough fuel to run from the bear, remain alert and keep our bodies cool, among other things. The overall effect is to prioritize energy to the Central Nervous System and Skeletal System, which are critical to survival in a life threatening situation. The rest of the body’s systems, such as digestion and reproduction, which are more essential for long-term survival, are temporarily reduced in activity.

Priming your body to go into Fight-or-Flight when under duress is just one of the many hats that Cortisol wears. Cortisol receptors are found on almost every cell in the body—that’s how critical it is to almost every aspect of our metabolism.
Modern Stress

Our bodies were designed to survive, and even thrive, in situations that are stressful in the short term. For most of our lives as a species, this might have looked like the situation just described. It might have been caused by something equally stressful, like falling into a river and having to swim to shore. In situations like these, increased levels of cortisol and adrenaline produce the perfect physiological response to help save your life.

But in our modern industrialized world, we are exposed to a constant barrage of ongoing, sub-acute stress throughout the day. Fighting traffic, meeting work deadlines, parenting issues, relationship glitches, the mortgage, the bills, taxes, and an endless influx of text messages, phone calls, emails, and social media alerts, each add to our stress. Then there are the stresses that don’t always feel immediately stressful, but that add to our overall stress levels in more subtle ways. These include: sitting all day, lack of exercise, overtraining without enough recovery time, skipping breakfast in favor of coffee, eating processed foods, staying up late to watch one more TV episode, or exposure to lots of artificial light after sunset.

When the stress state is prolonged, cortisol is maintained at higher than normal levels for extended periods of time. When stress is too intense, or goes on for too long, the adrenals get over-stimulated and eventually can’t keep up with the demands for cortisol production, though they continue to try. This results in Adrenal Fatigue. As the degree of Adrenal Fatigue progresses, cortisol production drops lower and lower, as does the production of other adrenal steroid hormones like DHEA.
The Pregnenolone Steal

Or, How increased Stress Creates Sex Hormone Imbalance

Our bodies make most of our adrenal hormones and some of our reproductive hormones like estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone from the same precursor hormone: pregnenolone. Ordinarily, pregnenolone is transformed into a multitude of various hormones, in optimal ratios, every minute of every day. But the minute our body perceives it is under stress, it diverts all the pregnenolone to the pathway that produces cortisol, at the expense of the other hormones.

This prioritization is elegantly designed. Progesterone, estrogen and testosterone are all hormones designed for the long-term reproductive survival of the species. Cortisol is about rescuing you, now. If your body receives a hormonal message that the external environment is threatening, or you’re in a famine and therefore in a fasted, hypoglycemic state, it’s probably not the best environment to bring a new baby into, right? So, your body focuses its energy and resources on saving you, and diverts its “attention” away from making hormones that are specific to reproduction and other “non-essential” activities. This allows for the production of a huge amount of cortisol, but inhibits the production of virtually every other hormone. When the stress resolves, our brain stops sending the signal to increase cortisol production, and hormone levels return to normal.

In the adrenal glands, pregnenolone can go down 2 main pathways:

1. Conversion into progesterone, as a first step on the path to being converted into cortisol, and/or cortisone, our main anti-inflammatory hormone.
2. It can be made into DHEA, which is the precursor to all of our sex-hormones.

When under stress, the body will shut down the DHEA pathway and prioritize the cortisol pathway. As a result, all other hormone production is shut down. While the majority of our reproductive hormones are produced in the ovaries and testes, roughly 30-40% is produced in the adrenals. This amount significantly impacts the maintenance of the overall stable hormone levels in circulation.

This brilliant system isn’t built to cope with today’s messy, stress filled world. We used to live in villages where everyone shared the responsibilities of life, food, shelter, and survival. For most of the humans on the planet, most of the time, everyday life was pretty ho-hum, and big stresses only occurred from time to time. Now we’ve each become our own village, wearing all of the hats every day, in industrialized countries. It turns out our lifestyle of convenience and high-speed access to everything may not be so convenient after all!
When The Bear Isn’t Really A Bear

Cortisol increases neurological excitability and heightens sensory perception. This is great for a survival situation, but the same mechanism can cause anxiety, panic, and stress. Good if you’re running from a hungry bear, not so much if you are sitting in a job interview.

Types Of Stress

Stress is classified in three broad categories:
1. Emotional or Circumstantial
2. Dietary
3. Pain & Inflammation

1. Emotional Or Circumstantial Stress

These forms of stress include but are not limited to:

- Grief
- Loss of a friend or loved one
- Bad relationships
- A difficult divorce or breakup
- Caring for ailing family members
- Toxic work environments
- Starting a new job
- Moving to a new place
- Post-college graduation expectations
- Starting a new business, getting married, buying a house, having a kid—and 3 years later, the stress of having a young family
- Lack of exercise, or excessive exercise and overtraining (especially cardio)
- Lack of sleep
- Overwork
- Keeping late hours
- Sleep deprivation
2. Dietary Stress

These forms of stress include but are not limited to:

- Skipping meals
- Overeating sugar and processed carbs
- Too much carb intake for your body in one sitting
- Alcoholism/drug abuse
- Restricting calories

Eating pastries at the coffee shop, or even bowl of oatmeal with raisins, elevates your blood sugar. As a result, insulin rises to help the glucose get into cells to be used for fuel. But the residual insulin from the surge can easily drop your blood sugar levels too low, so you crash a few hours later. The body then secretes cortisol to try to level out the glucose levels and over time, this stresses the adrenals because of the pull on cortisol production.

Going excessively long without eating also causes the body to secrete cortisol, due to stress, just as if the bear jumped out of the forest. Except we don’t register starvation as “stressful” mentally because the stress takes a different form. High sugar, high carb, and high grain diets, especially those low in fats and protein, act on our bodies in the same manner.
3. Pain & Inflammation Stress

These forms of stress include but are not limited to:

**Pain** is obvious: migraines, knee problems, bad backs, old unresolved injuries from sports or accidents, and severe menstrual cramps every month are just a few common examples. But people are rarely aware that they are inflamed.

**Inflammation** is anything that ends in “itis”: arthritis, colitis, gingivitis, etc. Inflammation can also come on after an acute infection that is severe, such as influenza or pneumonia, appendicitis, etc. But the majority of inflammation is caused by one of 3 things:

1. Chronic low grade infections (usually in the GI tract)
2. Exposure to foods that we are “allergic” or “intolerant” to
3. The oxidative effect of toxins such as heavy metals, trapped in the body’s tissues after exposure

The Effects Of These Three Types Of Stress:

Think about this for a minute: We’ve all gotten in a fight, or had some really bad news, or lost a pet or someone we love, and felt the immediate impact of stress and high emotions. But our body responds in the same way to chronic pain (like migraines and unresolved injuries), or chronic low-grade inflammation from undiagnosed gut infections, food reactions, or chronic viral infections. We have the same hormonal/chemical response. We don’t feel it on a conscious emotional level, yet it impacts our body just as profoundly.
So What Does This Look Like In Your Body?

Adrenal Fatigue, brought on by disruption in cortisol production, can develop suddenly if we go through an extreme trauma, or a major illness. But in most cases, it creeps up slowly, over years of ongoing low-grade chronic stressors, inappropriate food choices, and life’s ups and downs. I've never had anyone complain directly of Adrenal Fatigue. Typically, I recognize it through the symptoms my patients exhibit.

1. **Digestive Problems**: Chronic elevations in cortisol during the initial phases of stress, or chronically low levels from Adrenal Fatigue, contribute to leaky gut syndrome by opening up the tight junctions of the mucosal membrane cells and increasing gut permeability. This impairs both the immune and anti-inflammatory activity needed to resolve it. Dysregulated cortisol levels also directly suppress the main immune agent in our gut, SIgA, leaving us vulnerable to acquiring parasites, bacterial overgrowth, or yeast/fungal overgrowth. Suppressed gut immunity also acts as the turn-on switch for developing newly expressed inflammatory reactions to foods we eat regularly. This can be one reason why you start to have a “food allergy” to something you used to eat without any problems. Low cortisol levels also suppress our ability to secrete HCL (stomach acid) and pancreatic enzymes, both essential for the digestion of food into smaller, assimilable particles.

2. **Fatigue**: Low cortisol usually feels like low overall energy. This can range from just being slightly less vibrant than previously, to having a harder time getting started in the morning, to being flat-line exhausted by activities as basic as carrying the groceries in from the car. Low cortisol can also produce a feeling I call “Wired-Tired”, where a person has a low grade buzz to their nervous system, or chronic anxiety, or insomnia, while feeling tired most or all of the day simultaneously.

3. **Depression, Anxiety & Insomnia**: High cortisol creates a metabolic breakdown state where we use up our amino acids for fuel. This leaves less raw materials available to build neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine. Adrenal Fatigue is highly correlated with depression symptoms in studies. Elevations in cortisol also lower serotonin, our “happy neurotransmitter”. High cortisol is correlated with a higher risk of brain issues like anxiety, depression, panic attacks, brain fog, lack of concentration, and failing memory (it actually irreversibly fries specific cells in a part of the brain called the hippocampus, which plays important roles in the consolidation of information from short-term memory to long-term memory and in spatial navigation. It also is the first part of the brain to be damaged in the onset of Alzheimer’s disease)

4. **Female & Male Hormone Imbalance**: Elevated cortisol shuts down all body processes that are non-essential to immediate survival. This includes hormones required for reproduction. There is a direct correlation between elevated cortisol and reduced reproductive hormones, which can lead to problems like PMS, menopausal symptoms like night sweats and hot flashes, infertility, low sex drive, low testosterone in men, and poor erectile function.
5. Weight Issues: Our need for protein and amino acids is super high when we're stressed. But because our blood sugar levels swing from high to low, we have a hard time regulating them. As a result, people crave carbs and sugar, further exacerbating the problem. With abnormal cortisol levels, people will often find themselves with 5-100 pounds of stubborn weight that often won’t budge no matter how hard they work at their diet or exercise regime. Interestingly, I also see lots of patients with Adrenal Fatigue who can’t keep weight on. Until we fix their adrenal hormones, we can’t normalize their body’s composition and help them lose or keep weight on.

Earlier I mentioned how one of cortisol’s main roles in Fight-or-flight is to keep higher levels of circulating glucose in the blood for fuel. It does this by inducing a process known as gluconeogenesis, where fatty acids and amino acids are converted into usable blood glucose in the liver. Generally when our blood glucose levels rise, our pancreas secretes insulin to move the glucose into cells for storage, to be used later during periods of activity. However, cortisol negates the response of insulin, creating an elevation of blood sugar, even though you haven’t eaten any carbohydrates. The purpose of the stored carbs is to generate a source of rapid fuel for the body. This is required if you need to run from a bear.

But what if the bear isn’t a bear, but is rush hour traffic that’s making you late for an important presentation. Rather than running down the highway to burn off some of your excess adrenaline, you’re forced to sit there and feel anxious as the minutes tick away. Now you’re just sitting still, with high blood sugar levels circulating, and no good use for them. After a while, your body recognizes that you’re not using the liberated glucose. Your body then pumps out higher levels of insulin, to transport the glucose into fat cells to be stored. When you have high insulin and high cortisol levels your body typically stores this energy in fat cells located around the midsection or belly. Overall weight gain, or weight loss resistance are also common.

Chronically high levels of insulin can also lead to a pre-diabetic condition called metabolic syndrome (or insulin resistance) and type 2 diabetes, which also leads to increased weight gain. Because of the relationship to blood sugar regulation, anyone with diabetes or pre-diabetes, whether overweight or thin, should have their adrenals tested and seek treatment if necessary. Chronic stress also impacts appetite-regulating hormones like ghrelin and leptin, affecting our levels of hunger and satiation, as well as food preference.
Other Health Issues Related To Adrenal Fatigue

The previous issues are just the most common that I see in my clinic, however, the following issues are also typically rooted in underlying adrenal dysfunction:

**Autoimmune disease**
Cortisol shifts the way our immune system expresses itself. The different branches of our immune system need to be in relative balance to prevent autoimmunity.

**Inflammatory disorders**
Cortisol is the precursor to cortisone (like cortisone cream or the steroid drug Prednisone), and is our body’s main anti-inflammatory agent—with low levels, we just can’t put out fires.

**Blood pressure too high or too low**

**Low thyroid hormone production**

We need a moderate amount of cortisol to circulate daily to maintain body tissues, provide energy, put out inflammation, and other metabolic functions. When we get in to trouble is when we keep giving our body the message to pump out high levels all the time, or when our adrenals can no longer keep up the demand and our cortisol levels become chronically low.

**Chronically High Cortisol Leads To:**

**Increased risk of heart attack and stroke**

**Increased risk of cancer**

**Increased fat storage, especially spare tire, which is good if you are in a famine, in order to survive, but not good if you are trying to look good in that cute new bikini.**

**Lowered thyroid function**

**Overall tissue breakdown, poor repair of injuries**

**Adrenal Fatigue Is Fundamentally A Brain Problem:**

When we talk about adrenal “repair”, our aim is to reset the rhythm of the output of adrenal hormones. This process is dependent on restoring the feedback loops between the control centers in the brain.

The adrenals themselves do get fatigued. It’s sort of like overusing a muscle. The adrenals require specific nutrients and repair products, rest, and time to restore. But the real damage is in the brain, where we determine a new set point for the hormones we use to signal to the adrenals to produce cortisol. We adopt a new normal. It’s a bit like rebooting the software in a computer.
THE 5 THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO NOW:

1. Take My Quiz, Or Get Tested:

Visit my website to find the quiz: [http://briewieselman.com/resources/](http://briewieselman.com/resources/)

It’s a pretty safe bet that you have adrenal hormone imbalance if you have any of the issues discussed above. In fact I’ve never seen one case of female hormone imbalance, autoimmunity, chronic digestive issues, fatigue, or depression where the patient did not have abnormal cortisol levels. My quiz can help determine the chances that your stress hormones are contributing to your health issues.

However, in order to treat this clinically, you really need to test your levels using an accurate salivary assessment profile. While there are many available, not all companies provide accurate and reproducible results. Currently, I prefer to use BioHealth Labs in my practice, and you can order a test through my website. While there are other ways of testing adrenal function, such as urine, and serum, adrenal testing is best done using a saliva test, with 4 samples taken through the course of one day. It gives practitioners a picture of how much stress you have been under, compared to how much rest and relaxation you’ve had to balance it out, and also provides a “fingerprint” of your unique circadian rhythm throughout the day. It guides us in figuring out what needs to be done to correct and reverse the impact of chronic stress and stop the downward spiral of the stress cycle.

Be sure to have your results interpreted by a practitioner trained in Functional Medicine. They can assist you in setting up a personalized treatment protocol based on your results, to help restore the dialogue between brain and adrenals, and adjust the timing of cortisol production. If you would like to have me interpret your results, you can contact me through my website for an initial consultation.
2. Take Care Of Your Emotions

While we don’t always have influence over what happens circumstantially in our life, we do have control over how we perceive and respond to an event. This is more important than the event itself, in terms of its impact on our physiology. Our perception of the event determines our emotional and mental response. This results in changes in our heart rate and nervous system, which impacts our hormonal response. How we react determines if we have normal or abnormal physiological effects. For example, if we get in a big fight with our spouse, we may start to get cold symptoms the next day. The stress actually suppresses immune function. But if the couple has acquired skills to help the disagreement end in mutually gratifying resolution or personal growth, the stress response may have a much shorter duration, and the immune system (not to mention your intimacy) may actually be enhanced.

Intense emotions pass through us. Ever watch a child’s face? Emotions pass through them like sun through drifting clouds. This is different from the endless drone of ongoing mental chatter, or habitual emotional distress we experience in the form of worry, doubt, self-criticism, unexpressed anger, sadness, joy, love, and fear.

One of the best ways I know of to learn new tools for taking control of your stress response is to work on any unresolved emotional issues with a counselor, therapist, or coach, or to learn new tools for conflict resolution and for relating differently to everyday stressors. I offer coaching and also have a list of excellent coaches who would love to explore these issues with you, and help teach you new tools for dealing with everyday issues—in a way that actually transforms those experiences into opportunities for deeper self-reflection, personal growth, and awareness. By examining our attitudes, including negative thoughts, formed opinions, and repetitive, obsessive thoughts, we can become better equipped to deter Adrenal Fatigue.

One potent thing that anyone can do to unwind from an intense experience or a long day, or to set yourself up for a more flexible stress response is “square breathing”. This is a simple exercise that anyone can learn:

1. Take a slow steady breath in while slowly counting 1-2-3-4
2. Pause at the top, holding the breath in for a slow count of 1-2-3-4
3. Release the breath, exhaling slowly and smoothly for a count of 1-2-3-4
4. Empty your lungs completely, holding the breath out for 1-2-3-4.

I suggest repeating this for as short as 2 rounds in the middle of the day if you feel stressed or upset. Or, practice this regularly for 5-10 minutes in the morning to help shift your mindset and change the course of your day.

A few other recommendations for lowering stress that I frequently prescribe to my clients are:

1) Epsom salt baths

2) Getting out into nature, frequently

3) Getting enough sleep (7+ hours), and going to bed early if possible
3. Balance Your Diet

There are entire books written about customizing diet for adrenal repair, but the following guidelines are a good basic starting place:

1. **Hydrate!** A good goal is half of your body weight in pounds, consumed in ounces of water per day. For a 150 pound adult, this is 75 ounces, or a bit more than 9, 8-ounce glasses. Use a good quality filter or buy bottled pre-filtered water stored in glass, stainless steel, or non-leaching plastic water jugs.

2. **Sit down for meals—don’t eat on the go.**

3. **Eliminate or minimize caffeine consumption.**

4. **Eat for balanced blood sugar. Typically this means:**
   
   a. **Eat breakfast within 30 minutes of waking up.**
   
   b. **Don’t eat carbs alone.** Always combine carbs with healthy fats and high quality protein sources. Avoid processed carbs like cakes, crackers, pastas, and in general, eliminate sugar or greatly reduce its consumption. At each meal, focus on eating 1-2 servings of above-ground vegetables and 1 serving of protein. Add some healthy fat and some carbohydrate (best from non-grain sources) depending on your metabolic needs.

   i. **Proteins:** The most easily assimilated protein sources are eggs, fish, poultry, lamb, pork, red meat or game meat—which should be pasture-raised or grass-fed, or at a minimum organic/free range and natural.

   ii. **Fats:** Eliminate all hydrogenated fats. Use animal fats, coconut oil, palm oil, and grass-fed ghee or butter for cooking. Add vegetable/seed oils including extra virgin olive oil, avocado oil, macadamia oil, and small amounts of sesame oil *after* cooking food. Avoid vegetable oils like peanut, corn, safflower, soy, or grapeseed oil entirely as they contain a pro-inflammatory complement of Omega-3 to Omega-6 ratios.

   iii. **Carbohydrates:** The best sources for most people are root vegetables and squashes, (like yams, sweet potatoes, winter squashes, green beans, and some potatoes), however some people can tolerate properly prepared (soaked/sprouted) grains or grain-like seeds. While you should eat small or moderate amounts of carbs at the morning and afternoon meals, the best time to eat the bulk of your carbohydrates to support adrenal repair is in the evening.

   iv. **Above-ground Vegetables:** Eat as many as you can. Use them fresh, aim for organic where possible, and try to eat a variety. I like to tell people to shop for every of the color of the rainbow each week to get a broad array of vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients.
5. **Snack Smart:** If you have a tendency towards hypoglycemia (feeling shaky, tired, cranky, or spacey, or getting headaches) when you’ve waited too long to eat, you will want to have healthy snacks on hand. Do not go longer than 3 hours without eating a small amount until you have recovered strong adrenal function. These can be snacks or small meals, and should include some protein, fat, and a small amount of carb at each sitting. Since one symptom common to hypoglycemia is forgetting to eat, I’ve even had some clients set a smart-phone reminder or a watch alarm to remind them that it’s time to eat something! A short list of some healthy snack options are:

- a. Lettuce wraps with avocado, deli meat or smoked salmon, sprouts, and tomato slices
- b. Yogurt (cow, sheep, goat, coconut, etc.) with a handful of nuts and dried fruit
- c. Apple slices with almond butter
- d. A hardboiled egg with ½ cup of blueberries
- e. A smoothie made with blueberries, kale, coconut oil, chia seeds, and/or protein powder, and coconut or almond milk
- f. Grass-fed beef jerky with a piece of fruit

6. **Thinking ahead about meals.** This really helps people to make healthier food choices. Prep at the beginning of the week so food is ready when you need it instead of grabbing another taco or sugary energy bar.
4. Inflammation: Put Out The Fire!

Testing and treating the adrenals is one of the most important steps in ultimately getting control of long term inflammation. But beyond that, some things you can do are:

1. **Avoid known food triggers, or go on a basic high allergen food elimination for 1-2 months.**
   The Whole30 (http://whole30.com/) is one such good guide for general allergy elimination diet. At the most basic level, avoiding all gluten, dairy, soy, and processed sugar for 2 months, then testing them by introducing them one at a time and watching for changes in symptoms or how you feel, is a good first step. To take this a step farther, you can also avoid all grains, legumes, corn, and peanuts—this is referred to as a basic Paleo diet, and there are a plethora of recipe blogs and books explaining this diet available online. For people who know they have autoimmune disease, or who have obvious reactions to foods but can’t tell which ones, a clean or Autoimmune Paleo diet can be helpful in reducing inflammation. This version extends the basic Paleo diet by also eliminating eggs, all dairy, nuts/seeds, and nightshades. Generally, I see people who need this version of the diet be able to reintroduce some or all of those foods in time, without aggravating their symptoms. Meditation and stress relief practice, such as those mentioned before, also help lower inflammation in studies.

2. **Get help for chronic pain.** If you have shoulder pain, or back pain, or any other regularly occurring pain in your life, I highly recommend getting regular acupuncture, chiropractic, craniosacral, massage, or physical therapy support as one component of addressing it. These treatment modalities are extremely effective for many people. Still others need to work on repairing their adrenals to ultimately resolve the pain if it is perpetuated by chronic inflammation or non-healing connective tissue. One such issue that I commonly see resolve when the adrenals repair is chronic neck and shoulder tension/pain.

3. **Diagnose and treat any hidden gut infections.** Having low-grade chronic infections in your GI tract is one of the biggest, but most hidden sources of inflammation that you can have. The inflammation produced by harboring undiagnosed parasites can be as “stressful” to your adrenals as going through a messy divorce every day! And, it is fairly common for people to have these infections ongoing for 5-20 years and go undiagnosed. Some of these people don’t even have any digestive discomfort or digestive symptoms! Using a high quality stool test is one of the best ways to assess for parasites, dysbiosis, bacterial overgrowth or yeast/fungal overgrowth. I provide these in my practice, please contact my office to get tested.
5. Supplement Wisely

The most effective adrenal repair programs will be tailored to your specific hormone levels based on your test results. However, there are a few nutrients that are essential to adrenal repair and a few herbal allies that can be tremendously helpful, and are safe and available to anyone who wants to use them. A good quality multivitamin/mineral is a great place to start, as many with adrenal fatigue also have absorption issues and just aren’t getting all the nutrition from their food that they could be. Even on a high-nutrient whole foods diet, most of us just aren’t getting optimal levels of nutrients (this can be measured in red blood cell testing). Vitamins and Minerals that are in chelated forms are designed to be better absorbed through the GI tract, even in those with malabsorption issues. So a multi is just good insurance. Additionally, when we are in a state of Adrenal Fatigue, our bodies require exponentially higher levels of Vitamin C and the B-complex vitamins.

Finally, a good quality Adaptogenic Herb blend can be tremendously effective at helping modulate cortisol levels in the short-run. Adaptogens are a class of herbs characterized by their ability to modulate cortisol levels, raising or lowering them as needed. Adaptogens increase the resistance to the adverse effects of long-term stress and many of them have immune-stimulating properties and increase general sense of well-being. Some of the better known herbs in this class include the Ginsengs, Eleuthero, Holy Basil/Tulsi, Ashwaganda, and Rhodiola. Adaptogens should be taken either 2 or 3 times daily for best results. A safe bet is to use a blend of many of them. If you struggle with sleep issues, you may be better supported by taking an herb like Rhodiola or Eleuthero (Siberian Ginseng) during the morning and at lunch, and taking Ashwaganda (which is known to support sleep) in the evening. Below are some of the physician grade brands that I use in my practice—these are appropriate for most people:

1) **Twice Daily Multi Vitamin** by DFH
2) **B-supreme** by DFH
3) **Vitamin C**
4) **Adapto-mend** by Douglas or **HPA Adapt** by Integrative Therapeutics

**To Order:** Please email [clientcare@omintegrativehealth.com](mailto:clientcare@omintegrativehealth.com) to place an order and to get clinically active dosage recommendations emailed to you.
A Closing Note From Brie

Thousands of research studies show that stress increases the likelihood of developing heart disease, asthma, diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer’s disease, depression and anxiety. Stress ages us prematurely and is even correlated with premature death! But now you know that you can take control and influence the effects that stress has on your body’s health and wellbeing with a few simple steps.

In my clinic, each week I hear patients’ reports of vanishing migraines, alleviated PMS, suddenly successful fertility, improved sleep, stubborn pounds shedding after years of frustration, and best of all, dramatic increases in energy, as we work to reprogram their adrenal hormone function. The single most common benefit I see in my patients is harder to quantify—a newfound brightness in someone’s eye, more smiling, and a reclaimed joy and sense of possibility in their voices.

As you now know, a nutrient rich diet and regular exercise are important, but in many situations, those measures alone will not be enough to overcome the hurdles of hormonal imbalance that have usually resulted from years of unmanaged stress, and less-than-optimal diet and lifestyle choices. If you haven’t already, head over to my Self-Assessment Quiz to see if Adrenal Fatigue may be an underlying cause of your health symptoms. Try adding in some of the above recommendations, or schedule an appointment with me for some simple testing, to get support reprogramming your hormones and to change your life! Healing my Adrenal function changed my wellness and my life profoundly, and I know it will change yours!

To your best health,

BRIE WIESELMAN  L.Ac
INTEGRATIVE HEALTH