

Adrenal Fatigue Defined

Adrenal Fatigue is a collection of signs and symptoms, known as a "syndrome" that results when the adrenal glands function below the necessary level. A syndrome is a collection of symptoms that do not have a specific name assigned to them. Adrenal Fatigue is most commonly associated with intense or prolonged stress. It can also develop during or after long standing emotional stress and/or acute or chronic infections, especially respiratory infections such as influenza, bronchitis or pneumonia.

The most common symptom is fatigue that is not relieved by sleep. People suffering from Adrenal Fatigue do not sleep well, which contributes to their fatigue. Adrenal Fatigue is not a readily identifiable condition like measles, or a cut on your finger. There are no blood lab tests to identify Adrenal Fatigue. Although it affects millions of people in the U.S. and around the world, conventional medicine does not yet recognize it as a distinct syndrome.

Many people do not have any obvious signs of physical illness, yet they live with a general sense of weariness, un-wellness, tiredness or "gray" feelings. People can look and act relatively normal with Adrenal Fatigue. People suffering from Adrenal Fatigue often have to use coffee, colas, energy drinks and other stimulants to get going in the morning, and to boost themselves up during the day.

Adrenal Fatigue has become more common in the past 30 years as a syndrome. This syndrome has been known by many other names throughout the past century, including non-Addison's hypoadrenia, adrenal apathy, adrenal insufficiency and adrenal fatigue.

If you are suffering with Adrenal Fatigue it can wreak havoc with your life. In the more serious cases, the activity of the adrenal glands is so diminished that you may have difficulty getting out of bed for more than a few hours per day. With each increment of reduction in adrenal function, every organ and system in your body is more profoundly affected.

Changes occur in your carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism, fluid and electrolyte balance, heart and cardiovascular system, and even sex drive. Many other alterations take place at the biochemical and cellular levels in response to, and to compensate for the decrease in adrenal hormones that occurs with Adrenal Fatigue. Your body does its best to make up for under-functioning adrenal glands, but it does so at a price. The three stages of Adrenal Fatigue are:

Stage I This is known as the Alarm Stage where, the body is in an emergency crisis state. In this stage the adrenals are producing an excessive amount of cortisol in response to stress. The entire system is in a hyper state where the body is unable to relax. This stage can occur as a result of stressful bad diet and lifestyle habits.

The brain perceives ongoing stress from one or more of the following: physical pain, toxic chemical or heavy metal exposure, dehydration, nutritional deficiencies, food allergies, environmental allergens, immune system compromise, body scars or unresolved emotional issues. The body is preparing itself to "fight or flight" with this stress response. Other hormones are adversely affected when the stressors are not resolved, and the adrenals have to keep the cortisol output high.

Prolonged high cortisol causes the output of thyroid and progesterone hormones to decrease, while estrogen and the sugar-handling hormone, insulin, increase.

Stage II This is known as the Adaptive Stage, where the body attempts to adapt or cope with ongoing stress. In this stage the body is unable to reduce the stressors. The adrenal output of cortisol is declining as the adrenals begin to fatigue. The overall production of cortisol may appear to be in the same range as the normal levels, but the overall energy and health of the body is declining in a parallel path to the declining cortisol levels.

Stage III This is known as the Exhaustion Stage, where the body is unable to continue to respond to the ongoing stress to produce cortisol. The adrenal output of cortisol decreases due to the prolonged and unhandled stress. The entire system is in a fatigued state where the body is unable to function properly. The end result of this stage is adrenal fatigue and burnout.

The recovery time for each stage is based on the amount of cortisol output. The lower the total cortisol output, the longer the expected recovery time will be. The other hormones unsuccessfully attempt to compensate when cortisol remains low. Ultimately, the thyroid and adrenal output of many hormones decreases as the body becomes more fatigued and exhausted.

There is help available today for those suffering with Adrenal Fatigue. Dr. John Lee, M.D. pioneered alternative testing for Adrenal Fatigue using saliva testing over 30 years ago. Alternative physicians now determine which of the three stages of Adrenal Fatigue a patient is in using saliva testing. Several other hormones are also tested to determine which hormones that are being affected by the Adrenal Fatigue. Saliva testing is inexpensive, non-invasive, and performed in the privacy of the patient's home.

The results of the saliva testing aid the holistic wellness physician in determining which nutritional supplements will best help each patient recover from Adrenal Fatigue. The test results also provide an analysis of any existing food allergies to help the holistic wellness physician develop an individualized and customized diet plan for each patient.

Take the Female Hormone Quiz to determine if you have Adrenal Fatigue, or a hormonal imbalance. Fax the results to Dr. Fischer after completing the test. The results of the Female Hormone Quiz can determine if Adrenal Fatigue is developing, and if you can be helped.

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Adrenal Fatigue

What is Adrenal Fatigue?

Adrenal Fatigue is a collection of signs and symptoms, known as a "syndrome" that results when the adrenal glands function below the necessary level. Most commonly associated with intense or prolonged stress, it can also arise during or after acute or chronic infections, especially respiratory infections such as influenza, bronchitis or pneumonia. As the name suggests, its paramount symptom is fatigue that is not relieved by sleep but it is not a readily identifiable entity like measles or a growth on the end of your finger. You may look and act relatively normal with Adrenal Fatigue and may not have any obvious signs of physical illness, yet you live with a general sense of un-wellness, tiredness or "gray" feelings. People suffering from Adrenal Fatigue often have to use coffee, colas and other stimulants to get going in the morning and to prop themselves up during the day.

This syndrome has been known by many other names throughout the past century, such as non-Addison's hypoadrenia, sub-clinical hypoadrenia, neurasthenia, adrenal neurasthenia, adrenal apathy, adrenal insufficiency and adrenal fatigue. Although it affects millions of people in the U.S. and around the world, conventional medicine does not yet recognize it as a distinct syndrome.

Adrenal Fatigue can wreak havoc with your life. In the more serious cases, the activity of the adrenal glands is so diminished that you may have difficulty getting out of bed for more than a few hours per day. With each increment of reduction in adrenal function, every organ and system in your body is more profoundly affected. Changes occur in your carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism, fluid and electrolyte balance, heart and cardiovascular system, and even sex drive. Many other alterations take place at the biochemical and cellular levels in response to and to compensate for the decrease in adrenal hormones that occurs with Adrenal Fatigue. Your body does its best to make up for under-functioning adrenal glands, but it does so at a price.

What causes Adrenal Fatigue?

Adrenal Fatigue is produced when your adrenal glands, which are part of your hormonal system, cannot adequately meet the demands of stress. The adrenal glands mobilize your body's response to every kind of stress (whether it's physical, chemical, emotional or mental) through hormones that regulate energy production and storage, heart rate, muscle tone, and other processes that enable you to cope with the stress.

Whether you have an emotional crisis such as the death of a loved one, a physical crisis such as major surgery, dietary stress, or any type of severe repeated or constant stress in your life, your adrenals have to respond. If they don't, or if their response is inadequate, you will experience some degree of Adrenal Fatigue. In Adrenal Fatigue your adrenal glands function, but not enough to maintain your normal, healthy homeostasis. Their output of regulatory hormones has been diminished by over-stimulation. This over-stimulation can be caused either by a very intense single stress or by chronic or repeated stresses that have a cumulative effect. The effects of stress accumulate over time.

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Who gets Adrenal Fatigue?

Anyone can suffer from Adrenal Fatigue at some time in his or her life. An illness, a life crisis, or a continuing difficult situation can drain the adrenal resources of even the healthiest person. However there are factors that can make you more prone to Adrenal Fatigue. These include certain lifestyles (poor diet, substance abuse, too little sleep and rest, or too many pressures), a chronic illness or repeated infections such as bronchitis or pneumonia, or a mother who suffered from Adrenal Fatigue around the time of your birth.

How common is Adrenal Fatigue?

An estimated 80% of North Americans suffer from Adrenal Fatigue at some point in their lives. Sometimes this is temporary and only lasts a few days. At other times it can be debilitating and last for years (or a lifetime if nothing is done about it).

How can you tell if you have Adrenal Fatigue?

You may be suffering from Adrenal Fatigue if you regularly experience one or more of the following symptoms:

1. tired for no reason
2. trouble getting up in the morning even when you go to bed at a reasonable hour
3. feeling rundown, overwhelmed or feeling stressed
4. can't bounce back from stress or illness or pain in your body
5. crave salty and/or sweet snacks and/or caffeine stimulants
6. feeling best only after 6 PM
7. difficulty falling asleep and/or staying asleep
8. mood swings and/or anxiety attacks and/or depression
9. difficulty losing weight or feeling worse during or after a detoxification program
10. pain in the upper/middle back around the bra line for women, middle back for men

Are there other health conditions related to Adrenal Fatigue?

The degeneration that takes place in any chronic disease, from arthritis to cancer, place demands on your adrenal glands. Therefore, take it as a general rule that if you are suffering from a chronic disease and morning fatigue is one of your symptoms, your adrenals are likely fatigued to some degree. Also anytime a medical treatment includes the use of corticosteroids, diminished adrenal function is most likely present. All corticosteroids are designed to imitate the actions of cortisol, a hormone secreted by the adrenals, and so the need for them arises primarily when the adrenals are not providing the required amounts of cortisol.

Is there help for Adrenal Fatigue?

Dr. Carol Ann Fischer, D.C., N.D. has been specially trained to evaluate the adrenals through a specific adrenal hormone evaluation. She has developed a successful program to help restore balance to the endocrine system through chiropractic treatment and nutritional/homeopathic supplementation. Chiropractic care helps restore the communication and balance within the nervous system. Nutritional/homeopathic supplementation is used to provide the necessary building blocks to repair existing nutritional/energy deficiencies that have been created by adrenal fatigue. Dr. Carol Ann Fischer has helped thousands of patients regain their energy and adrenal function. A 30-minute no-charge consultation can help find out if you have Adrenal Fatigue, and what can be done to help restore your adrenal function.

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Progression of Stages of Adrenal Exhaustion

