



Natural Woman

focus on **STRESS**

“All of your tests are normal...”

The doctor says I’m not sick, but I know I’m not well.

The doctor says I’m not sick but I know I’m not well. Have you ever thought that this applied to you? Your body aches all over and it is hard to get anything done. You feel anxious or depressed over simple life events. Your ability to concentrate at work and at home is diminished. You have to drag yourself out of bed each morning. On the weekends you sleep until noon but still feel tired. Your weight has become unmanageable. You seem to catch every virus that you are exposed to while others never get sick. You have become allergic to everything. Your stomach stays in knots and you are easily overwhelmed. You feel like you have lost your edge and are no longer in control. Do these symptoms describe you? If so you are suffering from physical symptoms of stress also known as adrenal fatigue.

Unfortunately, millions of Americans suffer from undiagnosed stress related illnesses. Routine lab test results

are often normal leading doctors to believe that patients are physically well. Patients often are diagnosed with depression, anxiety, sleeping disorders, chronic fatigue, or fibromyalgia. Prescription medications such as anti-depressants, anti-anxiety medications, sleeping pills, synthetic hormones, pain medication, allergy medication and antacids are prescribed to alleviate symptoms.

You know that your symptoms are real, and you are not happy at your present level of health. You are also certain that you are not depressed and are somewhat resentful that the doctor has offered you medications without a definitive diagnosis.

Routine blood tests often fail to identify decreased adrenal function if the condition has not progressed to the point of disease. This newsletter will focus on how stress affects the body and the use of saliva testing to diagnose adrenal stress-related illnesses. We will also discuss how to restore normal adrenal functioning by using supplements, diet, and lifestyle changes. Restoring adrenal function allows the body to function normally and avoids the need to use drugs that only relieve symptoms.

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Stress—what is it and what can I do about it?

We often complain about stress; however, most of us don't know how it affects our physiology or our body's ability to function. Seventy five to ninety percent of all visits to primary care physicians are due to stress-related conditions. This staggering statistic alone warrants that patients and doctors have a clear understanding of how stress affects health

Stress is classified as any disruption in homeostasis; in other words, any disruption in physiologic or emotional balance. The classic example of stress is the fight or flight reaction to a life-threatening event. This stress reaction is an instinctive stress response that is common to all animals. When faced with a threatening situation, all body systems maximize efforts toward running or fighting, because an alarm has gone off, warning that there is a life-threatening stress.

Non-essential functions that do not aid in fighting or running are neglected in favor of systems that do take part in fighting or running from a threat or stressor. The stress response serves us well when we are attempting to avoid physical danger, allowing us to escape potentially life-threatening circumstances. However, most of us never face life-threatening situations, but instead are confronted with emotional stressors on a daily basis. Emotional stressors do not require that we run or fight, but require prolonged intensive thought and decision making processes. Unfortunately with time, the prolonged physiological affects of the stress response eventually takes its toll on our bodies.

How does stress affect me?

To better understand the long term affect of stress on our health, let's review the physiological changes which occur in response to stress. First, our body increases blood flow and energy (glucose) to our muscles to maximize muscle strength and agility to ensure that we are prepared for a possible long fight or run. Our heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing increases, as well thereby providing more energy and oxygen to our muscles. Blood glucose (sugar) levels in the blood are increased to provide more energy. Brain function and alertness is increased allowing us to think quickly.

All other functions that are not related to the stress response are neglected. Bowel

function is decreased; hormone production is disrupted; thyroid and kidney function is suboptimal; the immune system is decreased; and insulin, blood sugar (glucose), and lipid storage control are neglected because the muscles need a maximum supply of glucose. This shift in priorities works well as long as the stress is short lived. If the stress is chronic or prolonged, the stress response causes more problems than it prevents.

Chronic Stress

As the stress becomes chronic, the shift in priorities becomes a problem. Chronic stress may be due to work or family crisis, chronic illnesses, infections, pain, financial problems, loss of a loved one, or environmental exposure.

Prolonged stressors, even though they are not immediately life threatening, can be a source of much anxiety and eventually lead to depression. Cortisol is a major hormone produced by the adrenal gland. Its production takes priority over all the other hormones. This hormone mediates the physiological changes which occur in response to stress. Cortisol production takes priority over female sex hormone production, which leads to irregular periods, worsening PMS, perimenopause, and menopausal symptoms. Chronic stress decreases thyroid hormone function. Decreased thyroid function causes fatigue and weight gain. Insulin function is decreased, causing elevated blood sugar and eventually diabetes. Bowel function is altered, causing a decrease in absorption of nutrients and irritable bowel symptoms.

Tired in the morning... wired at night

Eventually, the body's ability to make cortisol at high levels diminishes. In healthy individuals cortisol is normally elevated in the morning and decreases as the day progresses. This allows you to be alert and productive in the morning and to wind down as the day closes, so that you can sleep at night. With prolonged stress, adrenal functioning diminishes. As cortisol levels drop, so does your ability to cope with daily stressors. The normal rhythm of cortisol production may be reversed leading to low cortisol levels in the morning and high nighttime cortisol levels. These reversed cortisol levels produce fatigue during the day and insomnia at bedtime, thus making you feel tired and wired.



Stressed and tired

If the stressor continues, the adrenal gland begins to fail leading to chronic fatigue, anxiety, depression, insomnia, poor bowel function, abnormal insulin and glucose function, abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride metabolism, diminished sex hormone and thyroid functioning, and a decline in mental functioning. Patients with adrenal dysfunction are also more likely to develop cancer, autoimmune diseases, and infections. Patients experiencing adrenal fatigue are often mis-diagnosed with depression, because of their symptoms of fatigue, inability to handle stress, mood swings, obsessive worrying, insomnia, weight or appetite change, decreased libido, and decline in mental functioning.



Without appropriate testing, these patients are prescribed anti-depressants and sleep aids to relieve their symptoms. However, these medications don't address the underlying problem; therefore, the patient must rely on medications to function. Correcting adrenal dysfunction eliminates these symptoms, thereby eliminating the need for symptom relief prescription drugs and their potential adverse side effects.

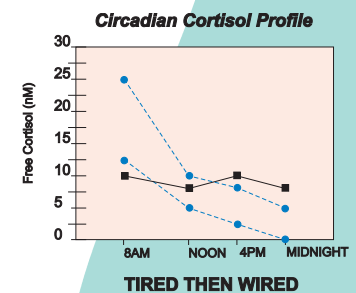
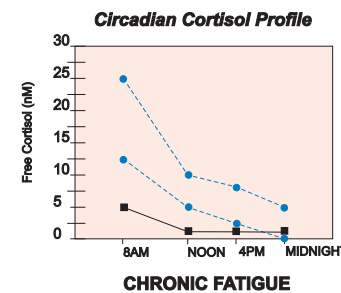
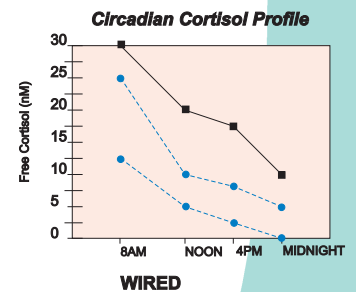
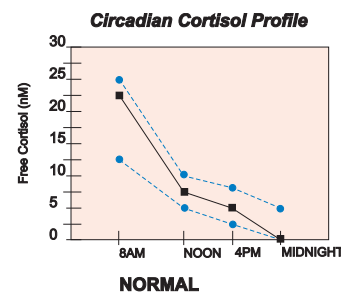


Saliva testing and stress

The best way to test for the effects of stress is through saliva testing. NASA and the US Air Force use saliva testing to test for adrenal fatigue in fighter pilots and astronauts. The test requires that you produce saliva samples four times over the course of a day.

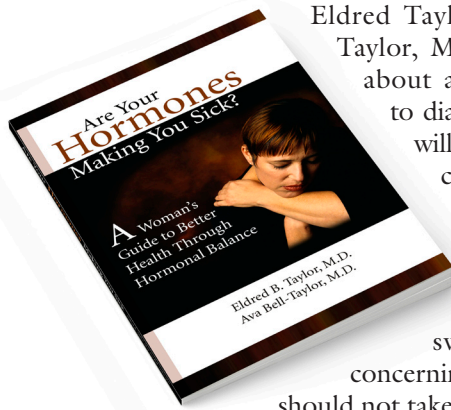


The results of the saliva tests allow the physical effect of stress to be measured. Adrenal dysfunction can then be corrected by using nutritional supplements designed to assist the adrenal gland in recovery from the effects of stress. Your health care provider can discuss the options available. If the adrenal gland function is severely decreased, as in the illustration below, you may need a prescription for bio-identical cortisol while you are taking the adrenal supplements. Bio-identical hormones are made by a compounding pharmacist, so you may also speak with your compounding pharmacist regarding treatment options.



■ Patient test results
● Upper and lower limits of normal

A Must-Read Book (revised for 2010)



Eldred Taylor, M.D. and Ava Bell Taylor, M.D. have written a book about a revolutionary approach to diagnosing women's illnesses will forever change the health care of women all over the world.

Previous books about women and hormones have made sweeping generalizations concerning treatment (i.e. women should not take estrogen, all women need estrogen to prevent osteoporosis and heart disease, and all women need progesterone or herbs).

Unlike other books written on the subject, this book advocates the use of objective and accurate testing through salivary testing before prescribing treatment. This book provides much needed information that allows patients and doctors to understand the value of saliva testing. Salivary testing is a must for every woman concerned about breast cancer, osteoporosis, infertility, menopause, fibroids, and PMS. Through salivary testing, women can now take control of their health!

Get your copy of *Are Your Hormones Making You Sick?* TODAY at Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.

What is compounding and how does it benefit me?

Pharmacy compounding is the art and science of preparing customized medications for patients. Within the last two decades, compounding has experienced a resurgence as modern technology and innovative techniques and research have allowed more pharmacists to customize medications to meet specific patient needs. Bio-identical hormone replacement for men and women must be customized to the individual. The compounding pharmacist is an expert in customized prescriptions.

There are several reasons why pharmacists compound prescription medications. The most important one is what the medical community calls "patient non-compliance." Many patients are allergic to preservatives or dyes or are sensitive to standard drug strengths. With a physician's consent, a compounding pharmacist can change the strength of a medication, alter its form to make it easier for the patient to ingest, or add flavor to make it more palatable. The pharmacist also can prepare the medication using several unique delivery systems, such as a sublingual troche or lozenge, a lollipop, or a transdermal gel or cream that can be absorbed through the skin. For those patients who are having a hard time swallowing a capsule, a compounding pharmacist can make a liquid suspension instead.

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