



New England Naturopathic Health

Corrie Marinaro, Naturopathic Doctor
Erin Hayford, Naturopathic Doctor

phone: (207) 873-9380
fax: (207) 873-9360
179 Main Street, Suite 408
Waterville, Maine 04901
www.naturopathicme.com
info@naturopathicme.com

Chronic Fatigue and Adrenal Burnout

Lecture Series II with Dr. Erin Hayford

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE THE ADRENAL GLANDS?

Basic Anatomy and Function

- The adrenal glands are 2 glands that sit on top of each kidney
- Each gland produces hormones that help the body cope with stress, regulate blood sugar and pressure, maintain fluid balance, and produce a small amount of reproductive hormones.
- One of these hormones cortisol, is the main hormone implicated in fatigue and burnout.

Roles of Cortisol in the Body

- In broad terms, cortisol regulates metabolism and helps the body respond to stress.
- Most cells in the body have receptors for cortisol, thus it has far-reaching effects:
 - How the body converts fats, proteins, and carbohydrates into energy; regulates blood pressure; regulates the immune response and suppresses inflammation; and many more

Normal vs Abnormal Cortisol Function

- Under normal conditions, cortisol rises in the morning to help us wake up and slowly declines as the day goes on reaching its lowest point by evening so that we can fall asleep.
- Additional cortisol is secreted in response to stress signals from the body, such as:
 - Skipping meals/ low blood sugar
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Pain or illness
 - Emotions
 - Work/life/relational stress
 - Inflammation
- Abnormal secretion arises in the presence of chronic, prolonged stress, resulting in chronically elevated levels of cortisol, eventually leading to suppressed or absent cortisol secretion.
 - This is a condition we deem Adrenal Fatigue, or Maladaptive Stress Syndrome (MSS)

WHAT IS ADRENAL FATIGUE/MSS?

Overview

- A syndrome caused by the adrenal glands' inability to keep up with the demands for cortisol
- "Maladaptive" because the body's response to stress becomes hurtful rather than helpful.

Symptoms of Adrenal Fatigue

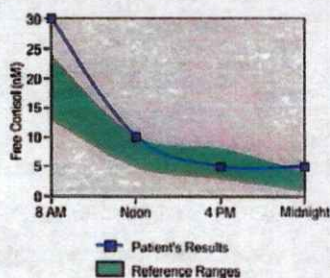
Depression and anxiety	Loss of menses/ low libido/ infertility	Weight gain/ difficulty losing wt	Insulin resistance/ blood sugar issues	Attention deficit disorder
Hypothyroidism	High blood pressure	Insomnia	Osteoporosis	Fatigue
Suppressed immune function	Digestive issues including IBS	Memory loss	Skin issues	Decreased learning function

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

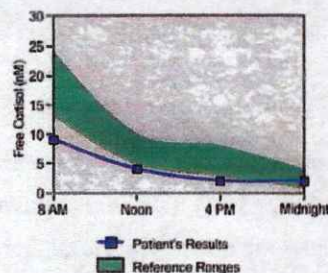
Diagnosis

- Standard labs to rule out other contributing causes/diagnose any conditions caused by MSS
- Salivary Cortisol Test

Patient 1 (MSS 2):



Patient 2 (MSS3):



Treatment

Reduce stress! But how? Stress is any threat to homeostasis (balance in the body), not just psychological!

Physiological stressors:

- Eat regular meals
- Sleep regular hours - early to bed, early to rise
- Stay hydrated
- Reduce inflammation by healing your gut, chronic illnesses, and infections!

Psychological stressors:

- Work on BOUNDARIES and saying NO
- Consider: Is your stressful job/relationship/lifestyle worth it?
- Counseling/ Biofeedback

General Stress Reduction:

- Meditation
- Breathing exercises
- Exercise/being in nature
- Herbal medicine