

Poor Adrenal Function May Be the Cause of Chronic Fatigue

Your adrenal glands are each no bigger than a walnut and weigh less than a grape, yet are responsible for one of the most important functions in your body: *managing your stress*. When your adrenal glands are overtaxed, a condition known as adrenal fatigue or adrenal exhaustion sets in, which in turn can set a cascade of disease processes into motion. One tell-tale sign of adrenal burnout is feeling chronically fatigued.

Conventionally, you'd see an endocrinologist who would evaluate your adrenal glands, or perhaps a doctor of internal medicine. Unfortunately, they tend to primarily test for specific diseases like Addison's disease or Cushing's disease, both of which are relatively rare.

What we find is that if we just restore what's missing in the person for a period of six months or maybe at the most 12 months, the adrenal glands and the internal production of these hormones comes back," Dr. Kalish explains. *"So, we're actually restoring the normal production of these hormones in the body. The treatments, therefore, are relatively short-term.*

Another common hormonal cause of adrenal fatigue is hypothyroidism or underactive thyroid. Thyroid function is diagnosed by a blood test, but there's some controversy over what is normal and what's not. Many alternative doctors feel the conventional reference ranges are far too broad, and opt to treat people exhibiting sub-clinical thyroid symptoms.

What's interesting about the thyroid and the adrenals is that as the cortisol levels go up, one of the normal body mechanisms is to down regulate thyroid.. "So, most people with high cortisol are going to have lower than ideal thyroid hormone levels. At that point, it becomes a decision as to if you want to work on the adrenals, work on thyroid, or work on both together...

More than 90 percent of the time, the adrenal program is enough to restore thyroid function. When you start to take adrenal-support products, your internal production of adrenal hormones comes back. If you can restore adrenal function, it is possible to save the person from having to be on thyroid medications potentially for the rest of their life.

How Functional Nutritional Therapy Can Help You Lose Weight

One of the interesting things in terms of diet and weight loss is that, as soon as he gets people's adrenal hormones and brain chemicals back in check, he notices them gravitating toward more healthful diets.

Why is this?

Many food cravings stem from inappropriate blood sugar responses and imbalanced serotonin and dopamine levels — which control how your neurons fire. Once these are corrected, cravings go away — usually within the first month or two. Your cravings come from brain chemicals. When those chemicals are shifted, the cravings just disappear — like hitting the Reset button. Then people begin making better food choices, start to lose weight, and have more energy because insulin sensitivity and normal Leptin signaling are being restored.

The key lies in reversing the distortion in your appetite center and reestablishing your normal fat burning metabolism. Of course, the mechanism for reestablishing normal fat burning is diet and exercise, but if your brain chemistry perpetually prompts you toward making bad decisions, it will be a frustrating uphill battle. Functional Nutritional Therapy doesn't take the place of diet and exercise — it augments it, making it easier for you to implement the changes needed without as much emotional stress.

Are Toxins Making You Depressed?

There is very little scientific evidence for the widespread notion that **depression** is caused by an imbalance of your neurotransmitters. In fact, there is no correlation between serotonin level and depression. Many people with low serotonin are not depressed, and many depressed people have normal levels of serotonin. The same is true of dopamine.

However, there is good scientific evidence for a relationship between depression and environmental toxins. Toxins make their way to your brain, where they damage cells and change how your neurons fire. Being that toxins are commonplace in today's world, part of functional medicine involves identifying environmental toxins that could be damaging your brain and contributing to mood problems, Parkinson's, dementia, and a multitude of other diseases. We're all exposed to these chemicals to some degree because they're pervasive in our environment — in your air, food and water.

Some of the most significant environmental toxins are heavy metals, such as

mercury, arsenic and aluminum. Also problematic are chemicals like benzene and toluene, and hydrocarbons.

It is estimated that the average British and Irish citizen now has between 300 and 400 different neurotoxins circulating in his or her body at any one time. Even newborn babies are now born with some level of neurotoxic chemicals on board. Your body isn't equipped to break these down, so they tend to accumulate over time and dysregulate your biochemistry. Making matters worse, many if not most people have dysbiosis, or imbalanced gut flora, and some of these microorganisms are responsible for breaking down the toxins in your GI tract, so you can eliminate them. All of these problems contribute to today's toxic overload.