

## Stress Is Normal, But ... Part III

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In past issues we have discussed the physiology of stress and a simple test to determine if one is really suffering from stress. In this issue I would like to address the nutritional aspects of stress adaptation and recovery and a simple test designed to determine, probably better than any other, just how jaded the adrenals really are.

We should consider the first approach to stress as being one which would eliminate repeat stress signals. Obviously, this is easier said than done, but patients must be made aware of the difficulty in ever leading a normal life if they are going to continue to abuse the glands which are involved in the stress. Failure to do so will not only create new problems but could be very serious since adrenal failure will result in the ultimate failure to recover -- death. The seriously overstressed person is fair game for every infectious disease because their immune system is literally shut down. As we have noted, they are very prone to hypoglycemia with all its attendant symptoms.

### Diet

The diet can be very simple, with only one major restriction -- refined carbohydrates. These rapidly raise the blood sugar, creating a higher insulin release and quickly depressing the blood glucose, which, in turn, creates a demand for more adrenalin. This will raise the glucose back up to normal by facilitating the conversion of glycogen to glucose. The adrenals are already the most called upon gland due to the other stresses, so the stress of low blood sugar is merely another added load, which they often are incapable of handling adequately.

I like to have my patients follow this program:

1. Eat four cupfuls of vegetables each day -- half raw if possible.
2. Eat one bowl of oatmeal for breakfast.
3. Eat one whole fruit per day, avoid fruit juices.
4. As your principles and appetite dictate, you can eat as much meat, eggs, fish or other protein as you wish, after you have made sure the vegetable quota is filled.
5. Exercise to the point of raising heart rate above 120 for 20 minutes every day.

It is simple, easy to follow, and gives enough latitude so that patients are not constantly concerned about not getting enough to eat. Often I will even allow them one "sin day" per week. On that day they can have any treat they wish, from a banana sundae to a piece of apple pie. It is amazing how many of them report that the desirable food tastes overwhelmingly sweet after not having had any sweets for one week.

### Supplements

There are two major glands which we can support from a supplemental viewpoint -- the thymus and the adrenals. Although there are far more nutritional needs for normal function, these are the most important for rehabilitation after extended stress.

Vitamin C -- This may be the most important vitamin for stress-related symptoms since animals that are able to manufacture it increase their production by several fold when subjected to stress.

The mechanism by which it works is well-known. The hormone-producing tissues of an overworked adrenal become spongy and the blood vessels begin to rupture. Sounds similar to scurvy, doesn't it? Vitamin C helps to keep tissue tone and hormone production up. Although there is some difference of opinion as to what the optimum amount for supplementation is, for stressed out folks, I believe it should be a minimum of eight grams daily. The new Ester C formulations are probably the way to go for less gastrointestinal irritation and higher blood levels.

Vitamin A -- Numerous research papers authenticate that the thymus shrinks in the vitamin A deficient person. Restoring adequate vitamin A to the diet has resulted in the thymus increasing in size as much as 150 percent, which would obviously allow it to better produce the important immune factors it is responsible for.

Astragalus -- This herb is a mainstay of Chinese herbal medicine. Its primary use is as an immune stimulant. It also appears to be capable of destabilizing the membranes of certain viruses, including HIV. Because of the great history of this herb and the immune depression which occurs in extended stress, this is a good choice.

Potassium -- This marvelous mineral can be overlooked readily because of its supposed prevalence in our diets. We often fail to remember that the need for potassium is the largest of any mineral in the body (2.5 times greater than calcium). The adrenal glands cannot function without potassium readily available. A depletion of potassium may be the cause of adrenal hypofunction in hypoglycemia. I like to use a potassium that is combined with calcium and magnesium because without magnesium, potassium cannot enter the cell where it does its work. It is not unusual to have blood levels of potassium in the normal or even elevated range and a cellular deficiency of the mineral because magnesium is not there to facilitate its entry into the cell. I use from 1200 to 1500 mg supplementally daily.

Pantothenic Acid -- A member of the B complex family, pantothenic acid is another nutrient that is often overlooked because of its supposed prevalence in our daily food. Amazingly enough, pantothenic acid was the single more frequently deficient vitamin in a test of 1,200 patients from doctors' offices. When pantothenic acid is in short supply, the adrenals are incapable of producing adequate hormones, and one of the listed deficiency signs of this nutrient is hypoadrenia or low adrenal function. Although many are very conservative in the use of this vitamin, I have found that the effective therapeutic use should be from 1500 to 2500 mg daily.

Adrenal and Thymus DNA or Nucleoprotein -- Locked within the nucleus of every cell is the blueprint for rebuilding itself. Life, as we know it, involves the death and restructuring of the cells of our body on a constant, never-ending basis. When a cell reaches the end of its life cycle, it is torn down but, at the same time, rebuilt. The instructions for such rebuilding are contained in a substance we call deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA for convenience. If the DNA in a cell becomes weak or sluggish, or if it does not find adequate building materials, then the possibility exists that the cell will not rebuild. If it does not, you are that much closer to total death of your entire body.

In studying DNA, we found that glandular extracts from other animals were capable of stimulating this rebuilding process in man. Based on this, I often use adrenal nucleoprotein extract when I wish to rejuvenate, regenerate and restore normal function to the adrenals or thymus extract for the thymus. These extracts are available in tablet form -- alone or in combination with other nutrients for convenience.

#### Adrenal Function Test

1. Lie patient down in supine position.
2. Leave patient there for five minutes, requesting no

motion. 3. Apply blood pressure cuff, take pressure and record. 4. Leaving deflated cuff in place, have patient stand up. Immediately take pressure again and record.

Results: pressure should rise a minimum of 15 systolic points; anything less is indicative of hypoadrenia. If the pressure falls below that in the lying position, you have a serious case on your hands.

I have used this test, referred to as the Ragland Blood Postural Test for hypoadrenia for 30 years, and I find it extremely diagnostic as well as indicative of progress toward wellness for the patient.

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