

Davis Advanced Health System: Functional Medicine

BODY SYSTEM: HORMONAL

Stress and the Adrenal Glands

The Adrenal Glands are all about Survival!! When the brain perceives stress it focuses on the functions that prepare it for “Fight” or Flight”. Heart Rate, Blood Pressure, Respiration Rate, Blood Sugar Levels, Sensory Awareness and Reflexes are all heightened. Those functions that are not mandatory for immediate survival such as; Digestion, Reproduction and Immune Function are put on hold.

Today we are overloaded by the demands of modern life, which frequently causes high cortisol. There just doesn't seem to be the time to slow down and let the inner stress response relax.

Reducing Stress Recognizing Triggers

A big step in reducing inner stress is to recognize what triggers your stressful reactions. Understanding the things that stress you and how your body reacts to that stress is crucial to solving the underlying problems.

There are a host of physical and mental reactions to stress, and everyone reacts differently.

Knowing the common symptoms will help you to become more aware of when a stress response is triggered.

Common symptoms include:

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| Elevated heart rate | • Muscles tense |
| • Increased blood pressure | • Digestion slows |
| • Breath becomes shallow and rapid | • Blood sugar rises |

Keep a journal of your stress response...observe when you are having a stress response. Look at the physical and emotional symptoms, as well as determining what triggered the stress response. Write your experiences down and look for patterns.

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What to do...It is easy to forget that you have choices, and that there are many tools and techniques that can help you deal with stress better.

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Balance

- Unwind, let your mind slow down and lower your heart rate. This will help send your brain the message that it can scale back the cortisol levels.
- Put yourself first for small periods of time throughout the week. 10-15 minutes self-care will make a noticeable difference in your overall sense of calm and well-being.
 - Take five deep breaths, close your eyes and roll your shoulders back
 - Take a walk outside
 - Get comfy and drink a cup of tea
 - Call a friend and chat for a few minutes
 - Take a warm bath
 - Read a book or magazine

Remember, those who need self-care the most are generally those who are not getting it!!!

Introspection

Introspection is another tool to reduce the brain's negative talk and promote positive experiences and intentions.

Description:

The practice of Introspection or “looking within” is the duty of every human being to begin to come out of confusion. It helps one to cleanse the subconscious of negative thought forms called elementals. Our subconscious is teaming with these elementals. Our present day personality is the sum total of these elementals created throughout our lifetime. Looking within begins the process of dis-energizing these thought process that one is creating.

By incorporating Introspection into one's life, we all have opportunity to study our behavior as an impartial observer through recall and observation.

Technique:

Every day, in the evening for five minutes before retiring for the night, sit or lie in bed; trying not to fall asleep.

Begin to inhale and exhale on a 4-4 count, as you begin to recall the day through visualization. Recall the people you encountered and places you have been. Look at your reasoning and thinking throughout the day's events and encounters.

With leniency and impunity to self and others begin to ask:

- What did I think that I should not have?
- What did I not think that I should have?

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- What did I feel that I should not have?
- What did I not feel that I should have?
- What did I say that I should not have?
- What did I not say that I should have?
- What did I do that I should have not done?
- What did I not do that I should have done?

By practicing this technique, the dual nature of the self begins to become one. You become more conscious of your thoughts and behaviors.