

Adrenal fatigue can occur when the adrenal glands are functioning below the necessary levels for optimal health. In addition to making adrenaline, the adrenal glands produce important hormones such as aldosterone, DHEA, pregnenolone and cortisol. When cortisol levels drop too low, patients experience symptoms such as severe all-day fatigue, difficulty getting up in the mornings, inability to handle physical or emotional stress, muscle aches, sugar or salt cravings, moodiness, allergies, decreased cognitive abilities, and inability to tolerate thyroid hormone replacements.

There are several treatment options that can help patients with adrenal fatigue regain their energy and help their adrenals heal. Depending on the severity of the hormone deficiencies and symptoms, your doctor will tailor a treatment plan specific to you.

Patients who are in the early stages of adrenal fatigue, or whose adrenal fatigue is not yet severe, can benefit from some simple changes to sleep, diet, and stress levels.

Sleep

Getting adequate, restful sleep is very important. Patients with adrenal fatigue should try to be in bed by 10 p.m. each night, and should aim for a full eight to nine hours of sleep. Remove the television from the bedroom, eliminate light sources, and make sure your room is dark and is a comfortable temperature. Sleep allows our body to recover from the day's activities, and it is vital for good adrenal health.

Diet

Many patients are not aware of how good eating habits, with the right food at the right time, can help the adrenals heal. Patients with adrenal fatigue often experience low or unstable blood sugar, so it's important to start the day with a healthy breakfast and to eat small meals throughout the day. Get plenty of protein and healthy fats in your diet. And be sure to get a good amount of Vitamin C every day, as this is very healthy for the adrenals!

Supplements

Depending on where your cortisol levels are at specific times during the day (based on saliva cortisol test results), you may be able to improve adrenal fatigue symptoms with the right mixture of supplements and adaptogens. Siberian Ginseng and Ashwaganda can be taken in the morning, for example, to stimulate the body to produce more cortisol. Adrenal cortex can give the adrenals the precursors needed to heal and produce more appropriate levels of the adrenal hormones. And vitamin C, Pantothenic acid, licorice and chromium can help the adrenals function more effectively.

Hydrocortisone

For some patients with low cortisol levels (or low-normal) across the entire day, the prescription medication Hydrocortisone (brand name Cortef) can help reverse the negative symptoms of adrenal fatigue and



Adrenal Fatigue Treatment Options

improve the quality of daily life. Dosing is maintained at a physiological level, enough to bring cortisol levels back to the appropriate levels within the normal range. At this dose, the amount given is not enough to affect the body's own production of cortisol, but instead raises the floor of cortisol levels throughout the day to bring them closer to normal/optimal.

Your doctor will work with you to develop a customized plan to treat your adrenal fatigue, based on your test results. Along with the prescribed medications and supplements, following a good daily routine for adrenal health, including sleep, proper diet, and stress reduction, can optimize your recovery.