



## NATUROPATHIC WISDOM NOTES

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*Treat people the way they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.*

Goethe

Thank you for your continued support of my practice and Naturopathic Medicine on the North Island heading into my 22nd year of practice. Your many comments on the articles and newsletters I write encourages me that they are being read and the advice well taken! My new website has been a labour of love that has taken the last year to complete thanks to my webmaster and web designer! All the photos used are ones I have taken, my other passion, photography! The Year of the Dog starts Jan 29th 2006 and this is one Chinese summary for the year to come. The year 2006 is the turning point from Metal cycle to Water cycle. The turning point year always has some unexpected good or bad events that happen. So we need to watch our steps and pay attention to our safety and health in 2006. That means we need to sharpen our skills and absorb more knowledge first, then we can have a better career or money opportunity during the lucky years. It also represents a year of strength and prosperity.

### Adrenal Insufficiency or Fatigue

The adrenals glands are small triangular shaped glands that are located on top of each kidney. Despite their small size they play a large role in hormone balance and the ability to handle stress. Adrenal insufficiency results in excessive fatigue not relieved by rest, fatigue on waking, mid-afternoon slump of energy, difficulty falling asleep at night, poor concentration, irritability, decreased ability to handle stress, depression, increased reliance on caffeine, sweet and salty foods to get through the day and feeling chronically stressed and run down. Other symptoms include recurrent infections that don't heal well, dizziness when standing up quickly, extreme PMS or menopause, andropause and lowered natural killer cells suppressing the immune system in general.

The adrenal gland consists of an outer cortex and the inner portion called the medulla. The cortex makes four major hormones: cortisol (controls sugar, fat, carbohydrate and protein metabolism, inflammatory regulation, intestinal repair and the stress response); aldosterone (controls kidney function and the balance of potassium, sodium and water in the body); DHEA (anti-aging sex hormone important for bone and heart health and immune system enhancer), is the precursor for testosterone and estrogen in both men and women important for libido and pregnenolone production (precursor to DHEA and progesterone). The medulla is primarily involved with the secretion of norepinephrine and epinephrine (adrenaline responsible for the fight or flight response). These hormones set the tone for the sympathetic nervous system raising heart rate, blood pressure, blood sugar levels and dilates the eyes and bronchial tubules.

There are serious health conditions related to severe adrenal failure: Addison's, surgery where adrenals are removed and enzyme deficiency resulting in failure. Other chronic

conditions involving adrenal fatigue include chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, autoimmune conditions, type 2 diabetes, alcoholism, addictions, HIV and hepatitis C and cancer.

The purpose of this newsletter is to discuss the milder to moderate forms of subclinical adrenal insufficiency that are generally not recognized nor treated by the orthodox medical community and classified as "low adrenal reserve". The stresses that can cause adrenal insufficiency can be **physical** (extreme exercise, severe illness, surgery, exposure to toxic chemicals, nutritional deficiencies), exposure to **low frequency electromagnetic energy** (hair dryers, computers, cell phones, airplanes and electric blankets), **hereditary insufficiency, lifestyle choices** such as drugs, alcohol, street drugs, heavy metal exposure, sugar, coffee, pollution, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, or **psychological stress** (conditions related include angina, asthma, autoimmune diseases, diabetes, colds, high blood pressure and menstrual irregularities).

There are 3 phases of adrenal fatigue: alarm, resistance and exhaustion phases. In the **alarm phase** cortisol and DHEA levels are high with symptoms of sympathetic dominance, heart palpitations, panic attacks and diarrhea. In the **resistance phase** cortisol is elevated and DHEA is low with symptoms of insomnia, fatigue, anxiety, lowered immune system, suppression of thyroid hormone production, insulin resistance and elevated blood pressure. In the **exhaustion phase** both cortisol and DHEA are low with symptoms of depression, severe fatigue, chronic fatigue and insomnia, low blood pressure, and parasympathetic dominance.

Diagnosis of the phase of adrenal insufficiency is best done with a four point salivary test, with samples obtained early morning, noon, dinner and bedtime. Normally the cortisol levels are around 5 on waking and maintaining until noon then decreasing to baseline abruptly to the lowest levels in the evening and over the course of the night until 4am. This curve of secretion wakes you up in the morning and then allows you to fall asleep at bedtime. In early stages of fatigue cortisol levels rise and DHEA levels fall, then in later stages both levels are low. In office tests include measuring blood pressure lying and standing and observing the pupil light reflex. It is possible to recover from milder cases of adrenal fatigue in a few months while severe cases can take several years. These latter patients will find that their symptoms steadily improve however they are easily set back by other stresses and have less reserve.

### Treatment

#### Balanced Lifestyle

Get to bed at the same time every night preferably before 11pm (make sure your bedroom is dark to stimulate optimal production of melatonin during the night to reduce the incidence of most cancers) and obtain 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep, regular moderate exercise (walking for 30 minutes) 3 times per week, if not daily, eating a low stress

diet (avoiding sugar, caffeine, junk food, allergens), meditative techniques such as yoga, pilates, meditation, Tai chi and laughing more!

Food Allergens put a tremendous stress on the adrenal glands draining the natural supply of adrenaline robbing the body of energy, mood and motivation. The common food allergens are wheat, dairy, soy and corn.

### Nutrients

Supporting Mitochondria: these organelles are the source of the power supply in each cell of the body. Aging of the mitochondria contributes to aging of the body. Lipoic acid, CoQ10, N-acetyl carnitine, N-acetyl cysteine, glutathione, phosphatidylserine, phosphatidylcholine, plant sterols and sterolins (may increase DHEA in athletes), tyrosine, Vitamin C, E, B1, B3, B5 (pantothenic acid), methylcobalamine, folic acid and magnesium are all very important.

### Adaptogenic Herbs

These herbs improve the adrenal gland response to stress, promotes regeneration of the gland, increases concentration, improves the function of cortisol to regulate thyroid, insulin, and other sex hormones.

**Ashwaganda:** for phase 2 resistance with high cortisol levels, has mild sedative or relaxant qualities promoting a feeling of calmness and more sustained energy and useful for insomnia. It has anti-inflammatory effects, immune modulation, anti-anemic, promoting growth and appetite.

**Siberian ginseng:** for phase 3 exhaustion with low cortisol and low DHEA levels. Used for insomnia, exhaustion and during radiation and chemotherapy to protect the DNA and improve immune function. Improves mental and physical performance.

**Rhodiola or Roseroot:** found in the high arctic and was used by ancient Greeks, Vikings and Siberians over 2000 years ago! It is used for phase 2 or 3 adrenal fatigue conserves energy, not a stimulant to the adrenal gland but to the mitochondria improving energy production. Improves physical stamina, attention and memory, altitude sickness, fatigue, depression, anemia, impotence, infections, headaches, nervous conditions, longevity, fertility enhancement and recovery from surgery and accidents. Not to be taken after 3pm, in bipolar conditions or in severe anxiety.

**Adrenal Tonic Herbs:** These herbs nourish the adrenal glands, improves regulation of cortisol and DHEA, reduces side effects of the drug cortisone (synthetic cortisol), and is cortisol sparing in phase 3.

**Licorice:** for those with low blood pressure or those in phase 3 exhaustion. Has anti-inflammatory effects, breaks up mucous, has anti-ulcer properties with a mild laxative effect. I recommend this extract made into a tea or taken by the spoonful. Those who love licorice enjoy this remedy. Licorice tea may also be effective. Licorice may lower testosterone over time so to be taken 6-8 weeks maximum or add tribulus. Avoid if you have high blood pressure.

**Rehmannia:** taken once in the morning and helps to lower blood pressure, has anti-inflammatory effects and nourishes the adrenal glands.

**Relora:** Is comprised of Phellodendron amurense and Magnolia officinalis two traditional Chinese Medicine herbs used to treat stress for over 1500 years. It rejuvenates the adrenal glands, helps with anxiety, anxiety, depression,

irritability, poor sleep, lack of concentration, raises salivary DHEA levels and decreases cortisol in phase 2 of the stress response.

**Tribulus:** is another herb known to raise DHEA. Make sure you get the Mediherb Bulgarian source as there is much adulteration of this herb. This needs to be taken for 4 months minimum.

**Adrenal extracts** (porcine sources) are animal sources of these glands called "protomorphagen therapy", where the proteins of these glands are absorbed by the human and nourish the corresponding organ, in this case the adrenal glands.

**Intestinal Health:** Stress alters the balance of beneficial lactobacilli and bifidobacterium and lowers secretory IGA in the gut, the first line of defense in the immune system. Taking Seroyal HMF forte or Natren's bifidonate on a daily basis long term is very good for the immune system and supporting the adrenal glands.

### Recommended Reading

[Adrenal Fatigue](#) by Dr. James Wilson, ND

#### New at Office

**Influenzinum 2005/2006.** Homeopathic remedy taken once per week for five weeks every year to prevent the incidence of the current flu outbreak, for those who want to avoid the vaccine. It is not too late to take this to protect you for the coming year.

**Nutra Sea Oil on Sale:** \$13.34 for 200ml size bottle, \$16.79 for 120 capsules.

**Updated Recipe Booklet for Sale:** bound volume is \$13.50 each.

**Dr. Pincott's Free 53 Stress Reducers Handout.** Call or email for your free copy.

**Triad Test:** This new test from [www.metamatrix.com](http://www.metamatrix.com) offers three tests in one: food allergy testing, urinary organic acids and serum amino acid profile that combine to give the best individual nutrient requirements for the chronically ill patient.

**Detox Kit:** This easy to follow month long homeopathic detoxification kit made by Heel is composed of three homeopathic remedies that drain the lymphatic system, kidney and liver.

#### New Website and Recipes

Please check out my NEW website [www.DrPincott.com](http://www.DrPincott.com). On this new site we have organized things for easier navigation as well as providing a simple search engine for your health inquiries. The [new recipes](#) added this month are [Cranberry Sauce](#) (Sugar Free) and [Egg Pizza](#).

#### Politics

We have 2.5 years before the next election to educate our provincial MLA's regarding the goals of the naturopathic profession in this province. Visit Claire Trevena MLA in Campbell River, 287-5100, and make sure she takes the following concerns to Health Minister George Abbott on your behalf:

1. Provide NDs with access to necessary facilities for health care delivery
2. Allow NDs limited prescription rights
3. Provide NDs with referral privileges to medical specialists
4. Bring NDs into the mainstream of health care delivery