

## ADRENAL BURNOUT SYNDROME

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Thousands of people suffer from constant fatigue that is not relieved by rest and sleep. This is the main symptom of adrenal weakness or adrenal burnout syndrome. This article examines this extremely common syndrome – its causes, symptoms and the process of recovery of vibrant health by natural methods.

### WHAT ARE THE ADRENAL GLANDS?

The adrenal glands are rounded, disc-shaped glands about 3-4 inches across. One sits atop each kidney, located on either side of your lower back, just above where the ribs end. You may at times feel a sensation of pressure in this area when under stress. However, muscular tension and other factors also commonly cause pain or a sensation of pressure in this area.

The adrenal glands are essential for life. They secrete a number of hormones that prepare our bodies to respond to stress. These include adrenalin, also called epinephrine, noradrenalin, also called norepinephrine, cortisol and cortisone. The adrenal glands also produce aldosterone, estrogens, testosterone, progesterone, pregnenolone and DHEA.

These hormones regulate many body activities. Of greatest importance for this article is that the adrenal hormones, particularly adrenalin and cortisol, activate the body's fight-or-flight response.

This consists of increasing the amount of glucose or sugar in the blood, raising blood pressure, and promoting increased energy production. There are many other effects of the adrenal hormones, but we will focus on these effects for now.

Of great importance to our discussion is that the adrenal glands are innervated and stimulated by activity of the sympathetic branch of the autonomic or automatic nervous system of the body. This is the part of our nervous system that activates when we must respond to threats to our life.

### A DEFINITION OF ADRENAL BURNOUT

The adrenal glands may develop various types of problems. Before we define adrenal burnout, let us briefly discuss these rarer conditions.

Cushing's disease. Severe overactivity or hyperfunction of the glands is called Cushing's syndrome or Cushing's disease. It is characterized by a 'moon face', obesity in the trunk, muscle weakness, poor wound healing, kidney stones and often psychological symptoms.

This condition is relatively rare and usually caused by a tumor of the adrenal glands that secretes cortisol or cortisone, two of the important adrenal hormones.

Addison's disease. Extremely low adrenal activity is known as Addison's disease. It is characterized by weakness, fatigue, low blood pressure, changes in skin color, dehydration, anorexia, nausea, decreased cold tolerance and dizziness. It is also a fairly rare condition, though I have met people who say they have Addison's disease when they really are just in adrenal burnout, which is very different.

Addison's disease is also caused at times by a tumor on the adrenal glands that shuts down the glands completely. It may also be caused by a severe shock to the system, as happened in the famous case of John F. Kennedy.

Mr. Kennedy developed Addison's disease when his small patrol boat was suddenly rammed by a Japanese destroyer on a dark night during World War II. Most of the crew was killed instantly. He survived, but the shock damaged his body severely.

Adrenal burnout syndrome. Adrenal burnout syndrome is basically a mild form of Addison's disease. It is a low functioning or underactivity of the adrenal glands. It may also be termed adrenal insufficiency or adrenal exhaustion. It differs from Addison's disease in several important ways:

1. In most cases, it can be corrected using natural methods. We do not like using cortisone therapy or any bio-identical hormone therapy for this condition. Most often it is not needed and just slows true recovery of the adrenal glands.
2. In most cases, the cause is not a single shock to the system, as with Addison's disease. Instead, it is usually a slow decline in adrenal activity due to nutritional deficiencies and the accumulation of toxic metals and chemicals in the body. As these causes are removed, the adrenal glands easily recover.
3. Unlike Addison's disease, adrenal insufficiency or burnout is very, very common today, especially among adults. However, few physicians are prepared to diagnose it.

Fatigue versus adrenal burnout. Adrenal burnout syndrome differs from simple fatigue in that burnout is not relieved by getting a few good nights sleep, as is the case with fatigue.

This is the case because adrenal exhaustion is not just a sleep deficit, although that may be an aspect of the syndrome. Burnout is a deeper derangement of the body's energy-producing system, of which fatigue is one symptom.

#### DETECTING ADRENAL BURNOUT

Unfortunately, when a patient complains of fatigue, depression or other symptoms that are often related to the adrenal glands, most of the time the doctor does not ask the right questions and does not run tests of the adrenal glands.

Instead, patients are told to take a vacation, or given an anti-depressant, or told it is "in their head".

The right questions, however, would often be enough to assess the condition fairly accurately. These would include "How many hours of sleep are you getting?", "Do you use caffeine or other stimulants" and "What other symptoms are you having?". Let us examine how this can often identify adrenal burnout, even without other testing.

Signs and symptoms. A simple and quite reliable way to assess adrenal burnout in a general sense is with signs and symptoms. A common sign, for example, is a low blood pressure in the absence of other obvious causes.

Usually, the person will also often feel fatigued, even though one sleeps well. If one is not sleeping, the problem may simply be a sleep deficit. One may not feel tired, however, if you drink coffee, other caffeinated beverages or use other stimulants.

Another common symptom is depression. Others include joint pain, cravings for sweets, pain in the low back area and perhaps excessive thirst or craving for sweet and salty foods. Together these symptoms can help one decide if one needs further testing.

Hair mineral analysis. We have been using hair mineral analysis to help assess the condition of the adrenal glands for almost 30 years. We have done over 15,000 of them and are very satisfied with our results using this method.

Indicators for adrenal insufficiency on the hair mineral test, provided the sample is not washed at the laboratory, include:

1. A sodium/potassium ratio less than about 2:1.
2. A sodium/magnesium ratio of 1:1 or less.
3. A copper level of 10 mg% (100 parts per million) or more.

The hair mineral test also tells us how to correct the condition and is a very cost-effective and non-invasive test. In a few instances, high amounts of toxic metals in the body or other imbalances can distort the readings.

In these cases, we begin a nutritional balancing program based on what is revealed on the test. The true condition of the adrenals will be revealed on a retest in several months in almost all cases.

For this reason, we do not require any other type of testing besides the hair analysis and a complete list of all physical and mental symptoms.

Blood, urine and saliva hormone testing. Many holistic doctors today are testing the levels of adrenal hormones in the blood, urine or saliva. This is definitely a step in the right direction. However, we do not use these tests, as a rule, for the following reasons:

1. Not needed. We find the hair mineral test, when understood properly, provides plenty of information about adrenal activity.
2. Cost. Hormone tests are usually several hundred dollars. This is prohibitive for many people, especially compared to the hair mineral test.
3. Staging not needed. Hormone tests can assess how impaired the adrenals are, as does the hair analysis. However, we find that correction is not as dependent on the degree of adrenal weakness as much as it depends on how well one follows our directions for recovery.

#### CAUSES OF ADRENAL BURNOUT

Excessive stress, an important cause of burnout, can be from many sources. Chemical toxicity and nutritional depletion are among the physical causes. Mental, emotional or spiritual stress may be a major factor. Financial, family or other stress may also contribute to burnout.

Any excessive stress can deplete the adrenals, especially when weakened by poor nutrition. Working too much or emotional stress are two common causes. Excessive stimulation, especially for children, is another cause. Fast-paced, high-stress, fear-based lifestyles are a sure prescription for adrenal burnout.

Other stressors in cities are noise and electromagnetic pollution. Cell phones, microwave towers and appliances like televisions, microwave ovens and computers give off strong electrical fields.

Nutritional Deficiencies are a common cause. When under stress, the need for nutrients is much greater. Carbohydrates, when excessive in the diet, stress the adrenals. Diets low in protein may also create deficiencies. Inadequate or poor quality water affects oxygenation of the tissues.

Most diets are low in nutrients required by the adrenals. These include B-complex vitamins, vitamins A, C and E, manganese, zinc, chromium, selenium and other trace elements.

The reasons for this begin with how food is grown. Most food is grown on depleted soils. Processing and refining further deplete nutrients.

Habits such as eating in the car or while on the run further diminish the value derived from food. Also, allergic reactions to foods such as wheat and dairy products can damage the intestines and reduce the absorption of nutrients.

Toxic metals and chemicals often play a large role in adrenal burnout. Everyone is exposed to thousands of chemicals in the air, the water and the food. Other sources are dental materials and skin contact with chemicals. Over-the-counter and prescribed medications add to the body's toxic load. Most people do not realize that antibiotics and many other drugs accumulate to some extent in the liver and other organs.

Toxins may also be generated within the body due to impaired digestion. When food is not properly digested, it either ferments or rots in the intestines, producing many harmful substances that are absorbed into the body.

A healthy body has the ability to eliminate many toxins on a daily basis. However, as adrenal weakness develops, the body's ability to eliminate all toxins decreases. This produces a vicious cycle in which weaker adrenals impairs the elimination of all poisons, which then further weakens the adrenals.

Chronic infections play a critical role in some cases of adrenal exhaustion. Chronic infections may originate in infected teeth or gums, though they can be located anywhere in the body.

They contribute greatly to the toxic load of the body. Infections also cause inflammation and stress that must be countered using the adrenal hormones such as cortisol and cortisone.

Stimulants damage the adrenal glands. They whip the adrenals. Caffeine, sugar and alcohol are among the most common stimulants.

Less obvious but no less important stimulants may include anger, rage, arguing, hatred, loud music, fearful news and even movies full of suspense or violence.

Other activities that may act as stimulants and must not be overlooked include vigorous exercise, sexual preoccupations, recreational drug use or other thrills. These often provide a temporary "high", which is caused in part by the secretion of high amounts of adrenal hormones. However, over time, this weakens the adrenals and can eventually lead to adrenal depletion and insufficiency.

Stimulant use, however, can also be a result of adrenal burnout. While stimulants can cause or contribute to adrenal weakness, some who use stimulants do so because they are in adrenal burnout already.

Stimulants are attractive to one in burnout to provide temporary energy. This is an important appeal of the drug culture, both legal and recreational. It is also the appeal of loud music, sexual addiction, and even anger.

These activities or attitudes can provide enough adrenal stimulation to allow a person to feel better temporarily. This is an important reason why giving up one's addictions can be difficult.

When one gives them up, one must face the fact that one is exhausted, depressed and often just feels awful due to adrenal burnout. It is safe to say that most people addicted to stimulants or other drugs including cigarettes, cocaine, marijuana, and others has some degree of adrenal insufficiency.

Unhealthy responses to stress are another cause of adrenal burnout. These include habits of worrying, or becoming angry or afraid.

Don't worry, be happy is a great prescription for adrenal burnout. This applies particularly to high strung, nervous individuals and those with very active minds, as they are especially prone to adrenal burnout.

Congenital Weak adrenals. Many children today are born with weak adrenals due to their parents' nutritional deficiencies. This is not a genetic problem. Instead, it is due to the nutritional imbalances of the mother, in particular. These are passed through the placenta to the unborn child.

For example, if the mother is zinc-deficient, as most are, the baby is born low in zinc and often high in copper, cadmium or other minerals that substitute for zinc to a degree.

Fortunately, this means the problem can be corrected, though it is better to prevent it, of course.

By age three or four, these children are in burnout. They are often sick, depressed and have difficulty in school. Some of these children react to the situation by becoming hyperactive, compulsive, obsessive or by developing various other behavior problems.

On their hair mineral analyses, these children are often in a state of burnout at this early age, a relatively new phenomenon, in my experience. By gently rebuilding their body chemistry, however, their behavioral and other disorders generally vanish in a few months to a few years.

#### SYMPTOMS OF ADRENAL BURNOUT

In addition to fatigue, weakness and often depression, symptoms often include a craving for sweets, low blood pressure and low blood sugar. Low energy impairs every system of the body. Thus, secondary symptoms can range from impaired digestion, aches and pains to chronic or recurring infections.

Emotional and mental symptoms. Often, emotional and psychological symptoms are present or even predominant. Depression is very common. Apathy, despair and even suicidal tendencies are also quite common.

Emotional instability, mood swings, bipolar disorder, anxiety, and irritability are also common symptoms associated with adrenal burnout syndrome. The world can look evil, one loses faith in people, and a hopeless attitude is not uncommon.

Compulsiveness and obsessive-compulsive tendencies may be associated with adrenal burnout. One may become addicted or very attracted to excessive exercise, sex, loud music or other forms of excitement. The unconscious goal is always the same, to stimulate the adrenals into activity.

Many areas of life affected. Adrenal burnout affects every area of life. One may lose interest in friends, family and work. Relationships often suffer when one person in the relationship goes into adrenal exhaustion.

Unfortunately, many with adrenal burnout function on anger and resentment. These act as adrenal stimulants, providing a negative energy with which to function. Most of the world, in fact, functions on the negative energy of anger.

Bigger implications. While it is beyond the scope of this article, entire nations can go into adrenal exhaustion as a result of wars, famines and other catastrophes. When this occurs, the attitudes of the people change, and with it the leaders they elect.

This has happened many times in history, and is an important hidden factor in our politics of today in America. For example, a population in burnout does not feel capable of taking care of themselves. They will vote for more and more government welfare programs, often bankrupting the nation, without understanding the consequences of their votes.

#### THE PHYSIOLOGY OF ADRENAL BURNOUT

Low cortisol symptoms. Low blood sugar, low blood pressure, low temperature, depression, joint pain and allergies may result from low levels of cortisol.

Multiple chemical sensitivity is an extreme allergic condition associated with adrenal burnout. Later, blood pressure may rise as toxic substances build up in the arteries and kidneys.

Copper toxicity and burnout. Elevated copper and low zinc related to adrenal burnout impair the immune system. Chronic infections may develop. The stage is also set for the development of degenerative conditions. Cancer, heart disease, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases may be end-stage results of toxic accumulation and energy depletion.

Thyroid imbalances and burnout. Often secondary to adrenal exhaustion are other glandular imbalances such as hypothyroidism. The thyroid gland and the adrenals have a very close relationship and stress on one always affects the other.

Much less common is the development of a secondary hyperthyroidism, or overactivity of the thyroid. This may be a compensation for low adrenals, as the condition will disappear as the adrenals are allowed to rest and rebuild.

The adrenal glands produce estrogen and progesterone. They are the main source of these hormones after menopause. Premenstrual syndrome and hot flashes often have to do with weakened adrenal glands.

Reduced cellular energy production. Depression and apathy are often the result of low energy production in the cells. Also, cortisol provides a natural 'high'.

Thus, low cortisol can contribute to feelings of depression and even despair. Unsure if there is energy to get through the day, anxiety may occur. Irritability is common as one is less able to handle even minor stress.

Burnout and metal toxicity. When the adrenals are weak, copper builds up in the body. Elevated copper enhances emotions. Panic attacks, bipolar disorder, mood swings and schizophrenia are related to copper imbalance.

As one's energy level declines, other toxic metals build up as well. Mercury, cadmium, lead, arsenic, beryllium and others contribute to hundreds of physical and emotional symptoms.

## MYTHS ABOUT BURNOUT

### Myth #1.

Burnout is psychological. Burnout is a breakdown of the energy system of the body. Vital minerals are depleted or "burned out" (used up) and replaced by toxic metals.

Psychological stress may be a cause, and burnout can affect one's emotions and behavior. However, burnout itself is biochemical, not only psychological.

Recovery may involve improving emotions and dealing with psychological issues. However, it also involves rebuilding body chemistry because it is a physical condition as well.

### Myth #2.

People in burnout have no energy and cannot work. Many in burnout hold full-time jobs or other active lifestyles.

They may also appear in good health. However, they are often tired or stressed. They may require stimulants in order to keep going. Some bury themselves in their work to forget how tired they feel. One can go on like this for years in some degree of adrenal burnout. This usually stops, however, when

burnout gets very serious, as there is not enough energy to continue working hard and living a very active life.

Myth #3.

Vigorous exercise is good for burnout. Vigorous exercise can be attractive to those in burnout. Exercise may temporarily make one feel better.

While it may provide a boost, vigorous exercise further exhausts the bodies of those in burnout. People in burnout need to reduce exercise, often to a minimum. This helps conserve their energy and helps to allow their adrenals to rebuild.

Exercise in moderation can assist circulation and oxygenation, factors that may help with burnout. However, excessive exercise of any kind uses up energy and adrenal reserves that individuals in burnout do not have and cannot afford to lose.

Myth #4.

A vacation, a diet or a nutritional supplement can cause recovery from burnout. Most people never recover from burnout, although they could if they followed a nutritional balancing program to the letter.

Recovery also requires a strong commitment to healing. Recovery also takes at least several years. If one recovers faster, one was not in adrenal burnout.

Myth #5.

Burnout occurs mainly in men. In fact, it is more common in women today. This is due mainly to lifestyle changes in women.

Many women now work outside the home and raise the children as well. Many are also in single-parent homes or both parents work just to pay the bills and taxes.

Women are also more prone to copper toxicity, thyroid imbalances and other factors that can contribute to adrenal burnout. Women also do not realize in most cases they are different from men and have greater needs for rest and sleep. For all these reasons, we see more burnout in women today than in men.

Myth #6.

Burnout only occurs in those in high-stress jobs. Burnout occurs in all groups, regardless of occupation, income or educational level. In fact, many homeless people are burned out.

This helps account for why they may give up hope or be incapable of holding a job or supporting a home. In addition, burnout is a worldwide phenomenon today and is not limited to certain parts of the globe.

Myth #7.

Burnout occurs only in adults. In fact, it is common today in children and even babies. Most children today are being born nutritionally depleted and toxic as a result of the ill health of the parents. This can be measured with mineral analysis.

Minimal brain dysfunction, chronic ear or other infections, crib death, delayed development, learning disorders, failure to thrive, ADHD, autism and anti-social behavior may all be symptoms related to adrenal dysfunction in our children.

Vaccination, wholesale drugging of the children and other abominations led by our public health authorities and the medical profession are only making the problems worse in the long term. Children usually respond very rapidly to nutritional balancing program. This is not at all the same as throwing a lot of good food and vitamins at a child. It must be targeted, based on a properly performed and correctly interpreted hair mineral analysis. I teach this science to anyone who will listen.

Myth #8.

Burnout affects only physical health. Burnout affects every area of life. Family and work are often affected. Relationships often suffer. One may lose interest in everyone and everything.

There simply is not enough energy available for intimate relationships or for activities beyond those required for survival. Friends, family and employers are often unaware of what is occurring, which only worsens the situation.

#### Myth #9.

A hectic lifestyle causes burnout. This may be one of many causes. Oddly, however, a hectic lifestyle can also be a result of burnout.

Excessive activity, overwork and a very busy life can be a way to stimulate one into action and a compensation for feelings of exhaustion. When such a one stops working and running around, he will feel just how exhausted and perhaps depressed he really is.

A hectic lifestyle can therefore be a stimulant, like caffeine or loud music. It always makes burnout worse, but it may be the result of burnout, not the original cause.

#### Myth #10.

Overwork for years causes burnout. This is possible. However, adrenal burnout may also occur quickly due to a single shock or just a few traumas that occur in rapid succession. In some cases, however, it is not related to any single trauma or activity. Often a combination of factors causes burnout.

Whether one goes into burnout from an illness, accident, divorce, overwork or other stress depends very much on one's ability to handle stress, rather than the absolute amount of stress. In other words, some people handle stress and trauma far better than others. For this reason, we recommend a grounding, centering meditation to everyone with adrenal exhaustion. For more information about this, click on the article on this website entitled, Meditation.

#### Myth #11.

Burnout is an overused term without a scientific basis. Just because burnout doesn't show up on x-rays or certain blood tests does not mean it is not real. Burnout can be measured and quantified using tissue mineral testing and hormone testing.

The term is not overused. In fact it is greatly underused. A large percentage of the population is in burnout and it would be helpful if physicians understood it better, even if they have no drug "cure" for it.

#### Myth #12.

Plenty of sleep will take care of burnout. Unfortunately, this is not so. The person in burnout is unable to regenerate itself adequately during sleep.

In fact, waking up tired after 8-10 hours of sleep is a primary symptom of burnout. Like a weak battery, the body does not recharge itself during sleep.

#### Myth #13.

Cleaning out toxins will take care of burnout. The accumulation of toxins that occurs as the body can no longer remove them properly contributes to burnout. Exposure to toxic metals or chemicals can be an important factor in burnout. Eliminating them is helpful.

However, energy is required to release toxins. If the energy system is weak, just fasting or detoxifying will not be enough. Fasting, in fact, can and usually does make the situation worse.

One must rebuild the entire energy system by balancing body chemistry and providing nutrients as well. A one-month or even six-month 'cleanse' is nowhere near adequate. It can take over a year just to replenish one mineral.

Warning - For those in later stages of burnout, extreme detoxification programs such as fasting, raw foods or even chelating agents can be dangerous. This is because the body may lack the vitality to properly eliminate toxins.

Also, the eliminative organs are compromised. As a result, toxins that such programs release from various storage tissues may be redeposited in more vital organs such as the brain. This can significantly worsen one's health.

A gentle, complete program of rebuilding and nourishing the body must accompany any efforts to eliminate toxins. In fact, as vitality improves, toxin elimination will proceed on its own.

Myth # 14.

One will come out of burnout when one changes whatever factor or behavior caused the burnout. This means that if you just quit your stressful job or your stressful marriage, you will recover from burnout.

I wish this were true. It is not how it works, however. As one goes into burnout, vital minerals become depleted and toxic substances replace them. The toxic metals become part of the structure of enzymes and even parts of organs and glands.

For this reason, although one changes one's diet, lifestyle, attitudes or behavior, the toxins remain. This is very frustrating for people who expect a recovery after they leave a stressful situation such as a bad marriage, for instance.

Myth #15.

To recover from burnout, just reestablish close communication with those who are close to you. This is the cure for burnout in one popular book. Re-establishing excellent communication with those you love is always helpful. However, in my experience it is usually not enough.

In fact, it can be a source of frustration. Reason for this are:

1. As stated earlier in this paper, your loved ones often do not and cannot understand what has happened to you.
2. Burnout often affects your perception and attitudes. Therefore re-establishing good relationships can be complex.
3. Burnout is usually a multi-faceted problem that demands a more complete approach than just communicating better.

Myth #16.

To get out of burnout, one needs to get back in touch with oneself. As with Myth #15, this is an excellent concept, but in my experience is not nearly enough for recovery. One reason is that getting in touch with oneself is often complicated when the brain has excessive toxins, thanks to adrenal exhaustion.

Burnout, for example, often causes terribly low self-esteem because one's energy is low and thinking is foggy or clouded. Adrenal burnout causes most of its victims to become overly introspective. This is helpful in some ways, but damaging in others. The positive side of this is discussed at the end of this paper, and is very important not to miss.

Myth # 17.

One can recover from burnout in matter of months. It takes at least two years and often longer. Layers of toxins, infections and other adaptations and compensations must be undone.

Each adaptation uses up energy so that when one begins correction, there is little energy to work with. This slows progress and is one reason correction takes several years.

Eliminating toxins that have become integral parts of the organs and glands also takes time, like rebuilding a house.

Also, most people must replenish twenty or thirty trace minerals. This takes time, even if one does all the correct procedures to restore one's health.

If one recovers in months, I would assume one was not in severe burnout. However, often, a small recovery can feel like a cure when it is not.

As an analogy, those in burnout need an overhaul, not a tune up. One needs to commit to doing whatever it takes and devoting a few years to healing. This needs to become one's primary occupation or job for a while, allowing all other interests and activities to become secondary to the commitment to healing.

#### Myth #18.

Burnout is not an important medical problem unless the stress of burnout causes high blood pressure or another symptom. Burnout is degenerative exhaustion. It sets the stage for all degenerative diseases, because energy is a common denominator of health.

All illnesses start with fatigue. The body is like a newer car with power steering, power brakes and power windows. When the power goes down, the entire car stops working right. Burnout is a serious medical problem, although symptoms may be vague and unrelated to a specific disease.

#### Myth #19.

Burnout is new phenomenon. In fact, burnout is as old as humanity. Understanding adrenal exhaustion can even help us understand the rise and fall of civilizations.

For example, it is known that many great civilizations, including perhaps our own, have fallen slowly or even suddenly. Why does this occur?

One way to understand the fall is that the people, as a whole, go into adrenal burnout and cannot sustain the intellectual, cultural and social traditions of the culture. Wise leaders and strong traditions become replaced with vulgar habits, lower moral standards and leaders who sway the people's passions, but do not appeal to their higher sensitivities.

Constant wars, as occurred in Europe, can also contribute to burnout. Toxic technology can also take its toll. The Roman Republic was famous for its lead water pipes, for example. We are famous for our medical drug cures and surgeries, both of which involve a lot of toxic chemicals. Industrialization has brought large amounts of many toxic metals into our homes, air, water and food.

Even oppressive political and economic systems can contribute in some nations. This is a problem with the socialist and fascist ideologies that spring up around the world. They repress the people and, as a result, the people do not function well after a time.

Freedom, in contrast, tends to help people live better and function better. This was the goal of the founders of America, of course.

#### Myth #20.

Burnout only affects one generation at a time. This is perhaps the most pernicious aspect of burnout. Children born to burned out parents will be born nutritionally weaker and thus more prone to adrenal fatigue themselves.

Children today are going into burnout, as a result, at a younger and younger age. So the story of adrenal exhaustion cuts across generational lives.

This was ably demonstrated by Dr. Weston Price, DDS, in his classic book Nutrition and Physical Degeneration. Melting pot nations like America have an advantage in this regard. New immigrants are often the more ambitious ones that are in better health and can help rejuvenate the population.

Also, nations that emphasize freedom and individual rights allow people to devise better ways of coping and maintaining their health than those that are stuck in rigid prescribed social structures.

## RECOVERY FROM ADRENAL BURNOUT

Recovery from burnout is certainly possible. We have helped many people to do this. Our program is all about diet, rest and other lifestyle changes.

Be prepared to spend several years on a nutritional balancing program. This does not mean you cannot work or take care of your family during this time. However, lots of rest is critical and recovery still usually takes several years of effort. The following is an outline of the program we recommend for adrenal burnout:

1. An improved diet. For more on diet, click here for the Slow Oxidizer Diet Plan.
2. Plenty of pure water to drink. We prefer distilled water to begin with, and later spring water, in most cases. At least use a carbon filter on your tap. We don't like reverse osmosis water very much, nor do we like most alkaline water systems, "drinking water" or tap water.
3. An improved lifestyle. Loads of rest is the single most important lifestyle change. For some other details, click on The Healing Lifestyle and many other articles on this website about lifestyle.
4. About 6 or 7 basic nutritional supplements. These must be targeted and individualized using a properly performed and properly interpreted hair mineral analysis. For more information, click on Nutritional Balancing And Why I Recommend It.
5. A detoxification protocol is helpful, though perhaps not always needed. This involves the use of a near infrared sauna and perhaps coffee enemas or colonic irrigation. This is included with all nutritional balancing programs. For some general information about these procedures, click on Detoxification Procedures.
6. A meditation-observation exercise that is extremely centering and grounding. Click on Meditation to learn more about this excellent and simple procedure.
7. Shifts in your attitudes and perspectives on life, when needed. Attitudes of forgiveness, letting go, positivity, spirituality, prayer and more can speed up healing greatly. Several articles on this website such as Letting Go and others discuss how important these can be for healing.

Addressing all these aspects is the way to assure success. The preceding are general suggestions only. If possible, work with someone on our list of recommended practitioners. These are the only people I can recommend. Others, no matter what their education or experience, often do not know how to correct adrenal burnout syndrome. You may also work with us by mail if you prefer. Click on Find A Practitioner for the list of approved practitioners.

What about adrenal and other testing? In general, we require only the hair mineral analysis, with repeated tests every six months for several years. Food allergy testing may be helpful, but usually not needed, in cases of severe food intolerances.

We do not tend to need hormone tests, blood tests or other types of tests, although we are happy to review any tests you may have. However, we never discourage other testing when needed.

What about bio-identical hormone replacement therapy? We do not use any hormones at all. This is important to emphasize. Many holistic doctors suggest using low-dose cortisone, DHEA, pregnenolone, testosterone and other hormone replacements.

We do not find this necessary. Also, we find that even bio-identical hormone therapy may easily delay real healing of the adrenals. We much prefer to rebuild the adrenals through nutrition and detoxification and we have excellent success if a person will follow our simple dietary and lifestyle program.

Hormone replacement often complicates things because the body's hormonal regulatory and feedback system is very complex and hard to duplicate with hormone pills or shots.

What about anti-depressants and other drug therapies for burnout? We very rarely recommend any pharmaceutical or over-the-counter drug for any reason.

Exceptions include if one absolutely cannot sleep or perhaps, if one has a severe parasitic infection or some other serious infection. In almost all these cases, however, natural products such as colloidal silver, herbal remedies and other work well at a lower cost and with far fewer side effects.

We do not take people off prescribed medication. That is a matter between you and your prescribing doctor.

### THE BLESSING OF BURNOUT

Adrenal burnout can be the best thing that happens to a person. It is a wake up call. Often, some area of life is out of balance or alignment.

Addressing burnout is often the starting point for a deeper exploration of self. Rather than just existing as a programmed zombie, adrenal burnout may be the beginning of real living.

This was the case for me, and for many patients I have worked with. I suffered from adrenal exhaustion for a number of years. As I began to understand the condition better, I made many changes in my diet, lifestyle and most critically, my thinking.

I forced myself to do coffee enemas, to walk every day and to meditate daily, although I did not enjoy doing any these things, at first.

I let go of family ties and other relationships that I discovered were toxic and harmful for me. I also moved out of the polluted city, although the process was terrifying because I had very little energy or money to accomplish the move.

Perhaps most important was the need for more subtle changes in attitudes and mental tendencies. I realized how important it is to give up all victim thinking and negative thinking. I had to let go of thinking of anyone else as a victim, either, although that may sound like a strange attitude. I have written about this in other articles on this website.

I also dwelled upon and developed the spiritual or real part of myself. This is an incredible benefit if you can make yourself do it. In the process, I had to leave behind the superficial life style that I, like most people, had lived most of my life.

These shifts have served me extremely well, as they have served thousands of others I have since worked with. Thus, I have learned it is wrong to think that adrenal burnout, or any serious condition, is just a curse to be "handled" as quickly as possible. If you act this way, you may miss the greatest blessing of your life.

### THE SLOW OXIDIZER EATING PLAN

High-quality proteins and preferably organically grown cooked vegetables of many kinds are excellent for slow oxidizers. These foods help maintain blood sugar and support adrenal and thyroid activity. This diet will seem strict to some people. Change over slowly if you need to, substituting the preferred foods for less desirable ones.

**Eat Mostly Cooked Vegetables Twice Daily.** Cooked vegetables require less digestive energy and provide more concentrated minerals. Fill more than half your plate with vegetables. Frozen peas and others are acceptable when fresh are unavailable. Bake, steam, stir-fry or use a crock pot to cook vegetables. Root vegetables such as turnips, parsnips, carrots, rutabaga, daikon and celery root are very good. Vegetables need to be fresh, and thrown away if wilted or old. Avoid canned vegetables, most canned soups and potatoes, which are very starchy.

Most everyone does not eat enough vegetables. Add flavor only if needed by cooking in coconut oil, putting butter or even diluted nut butter on top as a dressing, or adding grated goat cheese or herbs. Vegetable stews and soups are also acceptable ways to add vegetables to your diet.

**Eat Some Protein Twice or Three Times Daily.** With each meal, have 3-5 ounces of a protein food. The best are lamb, chicken, turkey, eggs and some organic cows cheese, or goat or sheep cheese and plain yogurts, and some tofu or tempeh. Full-fat dairy is preferable to low-fat or no-fat dairy.

You may also eat some natural turkey or chicken sausage, natural beef and beef hot dogs without chemical additives and natural beef or turkey jerky. Eggs from free-ranging chickens are generally much better and low in cholesterol. Toasted almond butter is excellent for many people. Other nuts and nut butters are okay as well in many instances.

Once a week have pintos, black beans, lentils, split peas or other dried beans. Two or three times weekly you may have some small fish such as cod, salmon, sardines and flounder.

Avoid the following: Pork, ham and pork sausage and bacon. Processed meats such as most hot dogs, bologna and salami are less critical but best avoided as well. Meats should be hormone and antibiotic free. Also avoid tuna, swordfish and all shellfish, which often have too many in toxic metals. Also avoid protein bars high in sugar and all soy protein except tofu and tempeh. Avoid vegetarian diets.

**Fats And Oils.** Have one to two tablespoons daily of butter, real cream, coconut or palm oil, full-fat goat or organic cow milk, cheese, yogurt, or toasted almond butter. Other nut butters or nuts may be used at times. Avoid French fries, most deep-fried foods, margarine, shortening, bacon and most butter substitutes. Also avoid most processed oils from canola, peanut, sunflower, safflower, corn or sesame. More fats and oils are important if your hair analysis indicates a pattern of sympathetic dominance.

**Reduce And Avoid Most Simple Carbohydrates.** Most fruits and all sugars are too yin in Chinese medical terminology. Reduce all fruits to a maximum of one piece of juicy fruit daily or better, a few berries. Avoid dried fruits, most fruit juices and sweet fruits. Also avoid all foods in which one of the first two ingredients is sugar, honey, dextrose, glucose, fructose, corn syrup, rice bran syrup, chocolate or malt sweetener. Also do your best to avoid candy, cookies, cakes, pastries, ice cream and soda pop. These cause wide fluctuations in blood sugar and insulin levels. Do not substitute Nutrasweet, aspartame, Equal or saccharin. Splenda is better. A little maple syrup, xylitol, mannitol or stevia are acceptable once in a while. To wean off sweets may take some time but is well worth the effort.

**Reduce Most Grains And Avoid Wheat and Spelt.** Excellent grains include organic blue corn chips with sea salt, corn tortillas (especially blue or yellow corn), most real brown rice, quinoa and amaranth unless you have difficulty handling them. This difficulty should lessen as your health improves. You may eat a little pasta made of, corn, rice or quinoa.

Wheat products irritate the intestines. This contributes to leaky gut syndrome, gas, bloating, and many other problems. Avoid all wheat as found in breads, cold cereals, most rye bread, pasta, pastries, baked goods, soups and other products. Read labels as wheat is found in so many foods. If you wish to lose weight, limit all grain foods in your diet except perhaps brown rice and quinoa are acceptable.

**Beverages.** Drink at least eight four-ounce glasses of distilled or high-quality spring water, whichever is indicated on your program. Black tea, green tea and most herbal teas are acceptable. Also, one glass, up to six ounces daily of carrot juice, is excellent for most people. Preferably obtain it fresh. Also, one or two ounces of wheat grass juice is acceptable if desired or suggested on your program. Avoid drinking water, tap water and reverse osmosis water. Also avoid soda pop, sugar-free sodas, alcohol, most juices, punch and other soft drinks.

**Snacks And Condiments.** Although snacking is not ideal, do not allow yourself to become too hungry. Eat every few hours. Excellent snacks include blue corn chips made with sea salt or plain, toasted almond butter on a rice cracker. Others include nuts, seeds, a piece of goat cheese, an egg, beef or turkey jerky or a piece of chicken. You may use mild herbs and spices, especially East Indian spices such as cumin. Use only sea salt. Table salt is highly refined and best avoided. Table pepper is often rancid.

**Eating Out.** Frequent eating out is not recommended. Ask for exactly what you want if it is not on the menu. Ethnic food such as Chinese or Thai is often made fresh and offers meats and vegetables. Ask for more vegetables. Mexican food often contains too much carbohydrate. You might have chicken enchiladas with corn, not flour tortillas. Avoid fast-food restaurants. If portions are large, consider sharing a dinner or just ordering an appetizer. If bread is served, ask that it be taken away.

**Cooking And Food Preparation.** Cook in glass, enamel, steel, non-stick or coated aluminum. Crock pots and pressure cookers are excellent. Meats place in plastic bags in the freezer divided into meal-size portions. Defrosting meat is unnecessary. It will cook rapidly if not too thick. Avoid exposed aluminum cookware and microwave ovens. Making the simple effort to nurture yourself by preparing healthy meals is often important for healing and maintaining health.

**Eating Habits.** Eat regular, relaxed, sit-down meals. Eat slowly and consciously, and chew thoroughly. Chewing each mouthful 10 times will slow eating and improve digestion. Keep the conversation pleasant. Sit at least 5 minutes after you finish eating. Stop before you feel stuffed.

Do not criticize children or discuss negative issues at meals. Make your meals a pleasant activity. Avoid eating in the car, while standing up, on the phone or while rushing around. These habits impair digestion and reduce the value of the food. If 10 minutes is all you have allowed, better to skip the meal.

**Breakfast Ideas.** Alternate 2 eggs with a non-wheat cereal such as organic corn meal, quinoa or rice. Cold cereals may include puffed rice or corn, or other non-wheat-containing cereal. Nuts or seeds, or some natural turkey or chicken sausage can add protein to a cereal breakfast.

**Lunches And Suppers.** You may have just vegetables for a lunch or supper. You may also have vegetables with a protein such as chicken or turkey. Rotate foods every day to avoid developing allergies. If accustomed to starches at every meal, you may use root vegetables instead. Also include green leafy vegetables. Use berries or a piece of juicy fruit only as an occasional dessert.

## **THE HEALING LIFESTYLE**

For most people, healing means getting rid of their symptoms. This is a level of healing I cannot dispute. However, so much more is possible. I believe all human beings should be happy, healthy and at peace most of the time.

This article presents an outline of the home spa lifestyle. While it does not eliminate the need for doctors and medications, it can allow a person to achieve a level of health far above what most believe is possible.

## **HOME SPA LIVING AND EATING**

Meals at spas are simple and of excellent quality. Food choices are among the most important factors in this lifestyle. I can only present the basics here. For more details, a longer version of this article is on the website, [www.drlwilson.com](http://www.drlwilson.com).

**Vegetables.** Eat cooked vegetables at least twice every day. Vegetables increase the alkalinity of the body more than any other food group. They also provide many nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and fiber needed to pass food easily and quickly through the digestive tract.

The best vegetables for this program are roots such as carrots, parsnips, turnips, rutabaga and onions. The cabbage family of vegetables is also excellent. Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower compose this group of healing foods. Greens such as kale, spinach, mustard greens, beet greens and Swiss chard are very healing as well. Pea pods and frozen peas are also excellent. A bag of frozen peas cooks in 5 minutes and makes an excellent, tasty and filling snack or even an entire meal.

**Whole Grains.** Grains are excellent foods for those who can digest them. They are tolerated better as one's health improves. The best include brown rice, which is also available as pasta. Others are white basmati rice and blue and yellow organic corn (including organic corn chips). Millet, quinoa, amaranth and flax are also often tolerated well.

Grains provide many nutrients, neutralize an acid pH to some degree and provide what is called etheric energy. This subtle form of energy assists the development of the body to extend life and provide superior health and a joyful existence. This somewhat esoteric topic will be covered in a future article. Whole grains carry this energy more than most foods that can be eaten in quantity, which is why grains have been considered holy in most cultures.

Equally important is to avoid most other cold cereals and grains. They are mainly quite acid-forming. The worst are refined grains such as white flour found in breads, pastries, cookies and many other products. Even whole wheat bread is not part of this lifestyle. The reason is that wheat is a highly altered food due to hybridization, genetic modification and more. Pasta is better but easy to eat too much. Rice or corn pasta are preferable.

Gluten, a protein found in wheat and some other grains, is often not tolerated well in many people. This can be subtle and may not be revealed on any standard blood test or even on intestinal biopsies. Other gluten-containing grains include oats, barley, rye and spelt. I suggest avoiding all of these for the best results. This can be tricky as they are found in many processed foods. They are hard to completely avoid unless you stick with strictly fresh and minimally processed foods.

**Proteins.** Most people need some concentrated protein every day, and often feel their best eating a small portion twice or more daily. Protein foods, especially those of animal quality, offer many beneficial nutrients including vitamins, minerals, amino acids, fatty acids and much more.

Eggs, chicken, turkey, lamb, beef and some cheeses are among the best proteins with a few cautions. The main problem with meats is finding quality products. More outlets offer hormone-free meats from range fed livestock. However, this does assure cleanliness, a big problem with chicken, turkey, beef and pork.

In fact, pork, ham and bacon are not recommended at all due to the possibility of parasitic infection. Most beef cattle are deeply hybridized and not bred for superior nutrition. So we do not recommend eating a lot of beef, even the natural beef. Organic milk products, especially goat and sheep dairy products, tend to be of better quality. Avoid all processed meats and cheeses.

Beans, nuts, seeds and dairy are decent proteins, but not as high in etheric energy as are the meats and eggs. Fish is not listed as a high-quality protein food although it is nutritious. Most fish today are

contaminated with metals and chemicals, and often infections due to water pollution. Wild caught fish may be better, but not necessarily.

Vegetarian regimens are not recommended. Many people do well on them for a time, and indeed they are more "cleansing" for a while until deficiencies develop. Vegetarian regimens are quite deficient in some nutrients and very low in etheric energy.

Fruit. Fruits have very little etheric energy even when fresh. They have even less when dried, frozen or canned. Fruit often upsets the blood sugar level and can contribute to intestinal diseases such as yeast infections. Also, while technically alkaline-forming, the body may not be able to neutralize some fruit acids when digestion is poor. This can cause an acidic reaction in the body.

Water And Sunshine. Drink mainly distilled water. Water is essential to balance the body's pH and distilled helps remove some toxic substances. A few health authorities claim that distilled water is acidic and therefore less desirable. However, by effectively removing acidic waste products, distilled water assists in balancing the pH for most people.

Spring water is second best. Next is carbon-filtered tap water followed by water treated by reverse osmosis filtration or just tap water from a clean source. Drink three (3) quarts or more each and every day. Most people are dehydrated. Restoring proper hydration can take several months to a year. An excellent habit is to drink several large glasses of healthful distilled water upon arising in the morning. This plus a sauna is an excellent way to start your day.

Exposure to sunshine for up to 30 minutes daily, away from the hottest part of the day, can benefit almost everyone. If you are sensitive to sunlight, be sure to sunbathe early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Do not wear sunscreen of any kind for the best effects.

Food Supplements. Supplements are very helpful. However, this topic is large. I will only mention a few foods used as supplements that help many people. These are kelp, sea salt, brewer's yeast and rice polishings. Eaten in moderation with your meals, these provide extra minerals and vitamins that our food often lacks. They are very affordable as well. Kelp contains some toxic metals as it is from the sea. However, it also contains alginate that binds these metals. Always seek supervision regarding supplementation if you feel you need it.

Sparing use of common herbs can add nutrition as well as flavoring. Beware of herbs imported from Asia or Latin America, particularly Ayurvedic herbs and Chinese herbs. They may contain toxic metals or other toxic substances.

Foods To Avoid. Most of what is called food is not fit to eat on this healing program. Leave out of your diet all refined and processed grains such as white flour, most white rice, white and brown sugar, honey and all artificial sweeteners. For sweetening, if you must, use a little stevia, xylitol or pure maple syrup - and only occasionally.

Avoid table salt, as this has had most of its trace minerals removed and often aluminum and other poisons added. Table pepper is hardly better and is often rancid. Avoid most boxed and canned foods except the few listed above. Also avoid most frozen prepared meals, as they are highly processed and usually contain a long list of chemical ingredients. There is no substitute for reading labels if you are not sure what you are eating. Restaurants are a problem, as you have no way of knowing what the cook has added to your food, or the honesty of the establishment in terms of what you are getting.

Do not despair, however, as there are plenty of vegetables to choose from and many ways to tastefully prepare eggs, meats, poultry and the healthy whole grains.

Alcohol is never recommended, though a glass of red wine once every few weeks will not upset a healing lifestyle. A cup of coffee daily is too much, but a cup once a week is fine. Avoid soda pop, fruit juices and too many vegetable juices. Most of these contain excessive sugars and provide very little etheric energy. However, a small glass of carrot or green juice daily is excellent.

**Organic Foods.** Organically grown is a wonderful step to improved food quality, but leaves much to be desired. Organically grown foods are still mainly hybrids that are unhealthful to start with. These are often grown on mediocre soil fertilized with superphosphate chemicals that stimulate rather than nourish the crop. Some is transported thousands of miles and is not fresh at all. And always wash vegetables and fruit thoroughly, as any of it can harbor parasites and other microorganisms.

**Eating Habits.** Eat when hungry, meaning do not go long periods of time without eating. However, it is not helpful to eat all the time. Sit down when hungry and have a meal or a snack when needed. Also rotate your foods. Eat the same food no more than every other day.

Leave your anxieties, worries and fears behind when you sit down to eat. Relax if possible before, during and after eating. Sit quietly for meals and eat slowly and consciously. Avoid eating in traffic or in noisy places. Chew thoroughly and do not to drink a lot of liquid with meals. Drink up to 15 minutes before a meal or an hour or more afterwards. This prevents diluting your stomach and digestive juices with too much liquid.

**Cooking And Food Combining.** Cooking is important in this approach to health and healing. Raw foods, like vegetarian diets, often cause more problems than they solve. Cooking effectively kills many bacteria and parasites, and breaks down vegetable fiber and some connective tissue in meats. This makes many nutrients that much more available to our bodies and concentrates some nutrients. This way we can eat less of the food than if it were in its raw state. This is extremely beneficial for a digestive system under stress.

Cook food preferably at low temperatures and/or quickly by steaming, boiling in a little water or stir-frying. Soft boil eggs 3-4 minutes, scramble or fry lightly.

The simplest food combinations are easiest on your digestion. If you can adapt to a single food at a meal, such as a large package of frozen peas for breakfast or a large bowl of steamed carrots for supper, the happier will be your digestive system. Human beings used to eat much simpler meals than most do today. Also do not add any more dressings, sauces or spices than needed. These, too, can upset a stressed digestive system. Simple meals will also reduce your cooking time, giving you more time for your home spa experience.

## NUTRITIONAL BALANCING

Another key component of this lifestyle program is the use of hair mineral analysis to assess body chemistry and guide its correction through more specific recommendations for diet, lifestyle modification, a detoxification protocol and other modalities of healing.

The work of Dr. Paul C. Eck was instrumental in bringing this difficult science to a place where it can be understood and used well by healing practitioners. It is a tissue biopsy in which a sample of hair is used as the biopsy material, although any tissue could be used. Sampling hair is non-invasive and the sample is easy to store and transport without needing special permits or apparatus. It offers a unique window into the cells of the body and provides data that is not revealed on most blood or urine tests or other scans such as x-ray or MRIs. It can also reveal vital data about neurological and emotional conditions such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, schizophrenia and epilepsy.

Hair mineral testing has been used for over 75 years on animals and in analyzing soil samples, where it is the standard test. In our application, it will reveal the metabolic rate and oxidation type, tendencies for

over 35 health conditions including emotional and mental disturbances. It is also excellent to monitor progress and even to predict future illness and prevent them before they occur.

## THE HOME SAUNA

The near infrared light sauna is an essential part of this program. It allows the body to eliminate hundreds of toxic chemicals, and many toxic metals as well, in a few years time with regular use. The sauna also assists the body to eliminate chronic infections that most people carry. These include chronic sinus and upper respiratory conditions, among many others. The sauna also causes greatly enhanced circulation that detoxifies the internal organs and moves more blood to the peripheral areas. This is excellent for most skin conditions. Near infrared saunas are dry and clean, and use very little electricity.

Any sauna, but especially a near infrared light sauna, greatly speeds up the healing process. It is by far the best health investment I feel you can make. We can help you build one with free plans, or provide parts or a simple ready-to-assemble kit for \$500.00 plus shipping. View the website, [www.drlwilson.com](http://www.drlwilson.com), for more details.

## RESTING AND SLEEPING IN A HEALTHFUL ENVIRONMENT

Do your best to get 9-10 hours of sleep every night. Going to sleep between 8 and 9 PM will give you the most restful night's sleep.

Naps will also be needed, as one will feel tired at times as healing occurs. For this reason, do your best to live in a place with clean air, peace and quiet. Also, vigorous exercise is not a part of this program. We prefer for you to conserve your energy as much as possible for healing. Limit your exercise to gentle walking and practices such as tai chi and yoga, but only if done gently.

## MEDITATION

Proper meditation is a key for developing self-awareness and grounding. It can do much more, but this is our present focus and goal. For more information about meditation, see the articles on my website entitled Meditation and one titled Becoming Grounded.

The meditation we recommend is simple yet powerful. It will help eliminate from your energy field the chaotic energies that almost everyone carries with them. I learned it from a man named Roy Masters, whose website, [www.fhu.com](http://www.fhu.com), offers it on a cassette or CD with a book. I offer a somewhat expanded version on my website called the Meditation/Observation CD. The basic process is to move chi or subtle energy with your mind down the front of the body, almost as though you are standing under a waterfall or a shower. Later the energy moves up your back as well.

The process of fully cleansing your energy field so that life can flow unimpeded takes a decade or more of continuous practice. This may sound daunting until you realize that you spend much more time than this in school or at work, often with far less rewards. Spending a half-hour to one hour daily doing meditation, especially easy to do while in the sauna, just becomes a part of your lifestyle. It is a practice that is uniquely human and improves every area of your life, far more than just your health and your well-being.