

Nourish Your Adrenals **Toward the Fountain of Youth**

By: Donna Gates

Your adrenals are the real “workhorses” of your body. In fact, there is not a single function in your body that occurs without your adrenals playing some key role. And yet, most of us today—from baby boomers and people under a lot of stress to hyperactive children—are walking around with chronically deficient adrenals. Because our adrenals are intimately involved in each of our body’s functions, the symptoms of adrenal fatigue are wide-ranging. For the seventy five million baby boomers that are or soon will be seeking the “fountain of youth,” healthy, happy adrenals must become part of your formula for success.

Some Symptoms of Adrenal Fatigue

I firmly believe that weak adrenals play an underlying role in every symptom we are suffering from today. Some of these symptoms are: cravings for sugar or salt, a feeling of dehydration, difficulty falling asleep, general exhaustion, feeling spacey, foggy thinking, lack of willpower to accomplish, low libido, hormone imbalances, loss of muscle tone, weight gain (especially abdomen and waist area) and early aging.

Just What are the Adrenals?

Adrenals are little organs, about the size of a walnut, that sit on top of your kidneys. In Chinese medicine, the kidneys/adrenals are said to be where life force or chi energy is rooted. Their name indicates their place in our body. Ad means “near” or “at” and Renes means “kidneys.” In a nutshell, our digestive system, the organs in our brain (e.g., hypothalamus and pituitary), our thyroid, liver, endocrine systems, sexual organ system, heart and central nervous system don’t work when the adrenals have lost their life force or “spirit.”

Are You Depleting your Adrenal bank Account?

Keeping in mind that all of your body’s organs rely on your adrenals for energy, it really isn’t surprising that when things start to go wrong, exhausted adrenals are involved. Think of the adrenal as a bank—too many trips to with-draw money with very few or no deposits and you soon exhaust your supply. We create adrenal burnout.

Four Common causes of Adrenal Fatigue

Lets take a quick summary of those lifestyle habits that contribute to adrenal fatigue. Then I promise to offer you a perfect and complete dietary solution.

- **Too Much Sugar:** the body works hard to maintain a healthy acid-alkaline balance. The blood needs to be slightly alkaline. Sugar in any form is acidic, so when we eat too much of it, our body will find minerals from anywhere it can to produce this slightly alkaline blood. Eventually our bones and teeth will be forced to surrender their minerals from anywhere it can to produce this slightly alkaline blood. Eventually our bones and teeth will be forced to surrender their minerals to obtain those needed in the bloodstream, creating osteoporosis.
- **Stress:** Stress enlists the body's flight or flight response, including secretion of hormones like cortisol, which over the long haul devastates the adrenals. Cortisol is often called the "death hormone," because too much of it can impair your immune function and cause early aging. Cortisol raises your blood sugar level, which can lead to weight gain. Elevated blood sugar (glucose) causes your blood to become quite acidic and attractive to fungus, yeast and cancer.
- **Diets High in Animal Protein:** Most people have weak digestive systems, which are unable to digest protein. Once in the intestines, the improperly digested protein creates toxins and gasses that are poisonous to our body.
- **Drugs:** Americans are currently enamored with drugs, and whether the drugs are recreational or medicinal, they weaken your adrenals. Cortisone, steroids, overuse of antibiotics, birth control pills and Viagra are just some examples.

How to Heal Your Adrenals

Restore Your Inner Ecosystem: The Body Ecology Diet is perfect for healing the adrenals because it restores and maintains the body's inner ecosystem. No other system of health and healing focuses more on the importance of fermented foods. These probiotic-rich foods supply essential, dynamic micro flora and beneficial yeast that will quickly colonize in your intestines. At Body Ecology we have long focused on these beneficial micro floras and have a unique understanding of what they do. Our theory, based on the latest research, is that they communicate to our gut wall (aka our "gut brain") sending signals via the enteric nervous system to the central nervous system. They clean up, balance and restore harmony to the entire body over time. It is the micro flora that creates our inner ecosystem, and without them your adrenals will never become robust and hardy.

Nutrients That Create Resilient Adrenals

The foods you choose to eat today create tomorrow's energy. But you must choose food that generates energy and doesn't subtract from your energy.

Whole I am focusing here on some specific guidelines around "what" to eat for nourishment, there are critical principles in my book, like acid and alkaline,

proper food combining and the principle of uniqueness that demonstrate “the how.”

Vitamin and Mineral-Rich Foods: The adrenals must have a rich and steady supply of Vitamin C, b-Vitamins and plenty of minerals. Ocean vegetables and dark green leafy vegetables are high-mineral foods that I recommend having at every meal. If you can’t do that, you can obtain the benefits of ocean vegetables by taking ocean plant supplements.

Fermented Foods: An excellent way to build up healthy microflora is fermented foods. Microflora communicates with each other to ensure we have what we need to be healthy, young and vital—including vitamins and minerals.

Cultured Vegetables: When fermenting vegetables, lactobacilli and enzymes naturally present in the vegetables proliferate, creating an enzyme-rich, mineral-rich super food. When made with cabbage, cultured veggies are rich in Vitamin C.

Kefir: In the early stages of the BED, I recommend young coconut kefir. It’s an excellent source of B-Vitamins, and minerals. To make this, ferment the water from young, green coconuts. This produces a champagne-like, fizzy drink that helps control cravings for mineral-depleting carbohydrates and sugar. It aids digestion and helps cleanse the kidneys, heart and liver of toxins including mercury and other minerals. In the later state of the BED, I recommend adding kefir made from milk and fermented soy foods, like natto, miso and wheat-free tamari.

Healthy Fats: Fats “drive” minerals into the bones, warm the body and provide energy. On the Body Ecology Diet we emphasize the importance of using a variety of fats. Cod liver oil, raw butter and ghee are good sources of vitamin A for the thyroid, which is intimately connected to the adrenals. For a complete listing of healthy fats, see our latest edition of the Body Ecology Diet. Quality is important too. The amount of fats and oils you consume each day should be based on your individual needs and your ability to digest them. Your ability to digest them improves as you eat fermented foods and drink fermented beverages.

Green Vegetable Juices: Most juice recipes contain high amounts of concentrated sugars from sweet fruits, carrots and beets, which can feed yeast and opportunistic organisms. We make our juices with 75% celery (high in sodium—a must for adrenals), along with romaine lettuce, parsley, and a very sour green apple.

Reduce or Eliminate Sugar: Sweet tastes are important in our diet, but it’s not the type of sweets that makes the differences. I suggest the use of stevia, a sweet-tasting herb, as well as xylitol and Lo Han.

Substitute Coffee with Tea: Many teas are healing and aid digestion.

Restoring Energy by Resting and Sleeping Well

Restoring energy to the body is the first step to wellness. At times it may seem like the most difficult thing to do in an overly busy world. You can't fix burned-out adrenals without rest, so make it a priority. In fact, if you can take four days off from work or use a long weekend to turn out the lights and just rest, you will go a long way toward healing adrenal fatigue. After the fourth day, you'll feel like a whole new person.

Reduces Stress: Make lifestyle choices that reduce stress in your life. There are many options for reducing stress, such as: taking deep breaths throughout the day, listening to soft music, using calming essential oils and spending time in nature.

Get Plenty of Sleep: At 8:30 PM, start to wind down and prepare your body for sleep by turning off the TV and turning down the lights. No more emails. Slip into bed by 9:30 PM and be asleep by 10:00 PM. The winter season is the time to get more rest and heal the kidneys, adrenals and bladder in preparation for spring, summer and fall.

There is an art to establishing an inner ecosystem, creating energy, correcting digestion and healing the adrenals. We are creatures of nature and the Body Ecology Diet looks to nature to find the solutions. Following these basic guidelines for healing your adrenals can bring you more benefits than you can ever imagine, including more energy, a renewed sex drive, balanced hormones, a sharper mind and a sense of contentment—a natural solution to creating your own fountain of youth.