

In This Issue

[Monthly Health Topic](#)

[Newly Expanded Nutritional Supplement Section](#)

[Nutrition Tip](#)

[Health Tip](#)

Site Links

[Home](#)
[About Us](#)
[Compounding Services](#)
[Supplements](#)
[RX Refills](#)

[Contact Us](#)
[News & Announcements](#)

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Monthly Health Topic:

Chronic Stress and Adrenal Dysfunction

"The most wonderful time of the year" may unfortunately become "the most stressful time of the year" for many people. Societal expectations, family obligations, job pressures, and economic hardship can result in stress, and if that stress becomes chronic, it can result in Adrenal Dysfunction and ultimately lead to:

- Mood disorders and depression
- Increased risk of neurodegenerative diseases
- Osteoporosis
- Dementia/memory loss
- Sleep disorders
- Insulin resistance/diabetes
- Reproductive disorders
- Premature aging

The adrenal glands are involved in the "fight or flight" response. One of the body's initial responses to fear or stress is the release of hormones such as epinephrine (adrenaline) and cortisol that initially help us to react or adapt to a stressful situation. Cortisol raises blood sugar and blood pressure, and increases the breakdown of



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protein while inhibiting protein synthesis. Cortisol interferes with thyroid hormone action and stimulates visceral fat deposition, which can lead to metabolic syndrome. Medical literature has confirmed the correlation between high levels of cortisol secondary to chronic stress (hypercortisolism) and disease development, including:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Immune suppression
- Impaired thyroid function
- Decreased kidney function
- Exacerbation of skin conditions (acne, psoriasis, eczema)
- Gastrointestinal problems (GERD, Irritable Bowel Syndrome)

Over time, the body may no longer be able to produce the needed amounts of cortisol and patients can ultimately end up with low cortisol levels (hypocortisolism).

Factors which influence the development and progression of adrenal dysfunction:

- Duration and severity of stress
- Previous exposure to chronic stressors
- Individual coping mechanisms
- Gender (females are more likely to develop adrenal dysfunction than males)
- Personality (introversion)
- Low self-esteem

Treatment of Adrenal Dysfunction

- Stress reduction techniques -Gentle exercise, Tai Chi, yoga, Pilates, meditation
- Sleep hygiene - Regular sleep-wake cycle, avoid third shift work. The following supplements may be helpful: 5-HTP, Melatonin, Phosphatidylserine, L-Theanine, Calming herbs (Valerian root, Chamomile, Hops, Passion flower)
- Lifestyle modification - Delegating responsibilities to eliminate stressors, regular meals, avoid caffeine and alcohol
- Vitamins and minerals - Magnesium Glycinate or Citrate, B Vitamins, selenium, zinc, calcium, manganese, Vitamin E with mixed tocopherols, Vitamin C (Ascorbate)
- Adaptogens - Ashwaganda, Rhodiola, Holy

Basil

- Pharmacologic therapy - Low doses of hydrocortisone (by prescription, and closely monitored) have been found to help when the body fails to produce sufficient amounts of cortisol.

Our pharmacist will work together with patients and their physicians to treat adrenal dysfunction.

We welcome your questions!

Newly Expanded Nutritional Supplements Section!

Come in and visit our newly expanded Nutritional Supplements Selection! Our Nutritional Consultant Judy Meadows has extensive knowledge of vitamins, herbs and natural remedies combined with 15 years experience in the Nutritional Supplement field. She hopes to become a resource to those of you looking to improve your health and wellness.



New products arriving daily!
New sports nutrition section for athletes!
Carrying NOW Foods! NOW Foods has been serving health-conscious consumers with quality products and affordable prices since 1968.

Nutrition Tip:

Get Your Antioxidants In Daily!

Leading an active lifestyle can mean lots of stress on the body and exposure to free radicals that age and damage the body quickly. Antioxidants, found in many of the colorful fruits and vegetables we eat, protect the body from the

damage that can be caused by free radicals,



by neutralizing their effects on our cells. Look for a rainbow of fruits and vegetables and eat up!
Super-antioxidant supplements are another great way to ensure that your body get it's daily requirements.

Health Tip:

Walking To Reduce Stress



Walking recharges our batteries after tension and stress have drained them of power and energy. Walking is as natural to humans as breathing. It is the regular rhythmical movement of walking that reduces the tension in our muscles and leaves us with a feeling of pleasant tiredness, which results to a calm and clear mind. Walking works, because as

we hit our unique stride, we become unconscious of our body and its movement - we are aware only of the rhythm. During this period we can enter a total body-mind experience which makes us feel WHOLE! If you are not a fast walker, then walk slower for a longer distance. Birds fly; fish swim; humans walk.

So take your leisure walk today!



[Monthly Seminar](#)

Women's Health

Speaker:

**Dr. Sandy Elbaum
Chester Chiropractic**

Contact:

**Judy Meadows
Nutritional Consultant**

Date: Wednesday, June 15, 2011

Time: **7:00pm - 8:00pm**

RSVP BY: **Monday, June 13, 2011**

804-717-5000

**Have a problem with your medicine? Side effects? Bad taste?
Let us know - we can help!**

Sincerely,

**C.F. Sonny Currin, R.Ph (Compounding Pharmacist / Partner)
Chris Currin, R.Ph (Compounding Pharmacist / Partner)**



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