

Patient Information

Adrenal Stress Test

Stress can have a profound effect on our emotional and physical well-being, affecting everyone at some point and causing symptoms including weight gain, depression, digestive problems and many more. Continued imbalance of stress hormones can wear the body down, triggering chronic fatigue.

A powerful, precise and non-invasive assay, the Adrenal Stress Test serves as a reliable marker of the stress response and is a critical tool for revealing adrenal imbalances that may be subtly or dramatically influencing your health. The test, which simply requires four saliva samples, accurately reflects the levels of hormones by detecting the free fraction (bioactive) component of those functions at a cellular level.

The adrenals are responsible for the secretion of the body's major stress hormones, cortisol and DHEA. These hormones are not released constantly throughout the day, but are secreted in a cycle called the circadian rhythm, with the highest values being in the morning and the lowest at night.

What Causes Stress?

Factors that may contribute to stress include negative dietary and lifestyle habits (including over-consumption of stimulants such as sugar and caffeine), excessive exercise, injury, bereavement, marriage, divorce, debt, attitudes such as perfectionism, obsessive-compulsive behaviours, shyness, insecurity and also perhaps isolation and loneliness.

There are three stages of stress, which are commonly referred to as adaptation, resistance and exhaustion. Any physical or mental trauma will trigger an immediate set of reactions. The body releases adrenaline and a variety of other physiological mechanisms to combat the stress and stay in control. This is called the 'flight or fight response' and is an inherent survival mechanism. Once the cause of stress is removed, this process should normalise, but if the stress factor is not removed, over time the adaptation stage will begin. When this phase persists without periods of relaxation and rest, sufferers become prone to fatigue, concentration lapses, irritability, lethargy, increased infections, reduced libido and vitality, among other things.

The third stage occurs when the body is depleted of its 'adrenal reserve' and is fittingly termed 'adrenal exhaustion'. Symptoms of this stage include many of the above, with worsening severity leading to progressive mental and physical exhaustion, depression, illness and collapse. In this way, instead of a stress-causing event being the problem in our health, it is our inappropriate stress reaction itself which persists beyond the event and becomes more harmful.

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The importance of balanced stress hormones

- Maintain emotional and physical energy
- Strengthen the immune system against colds, coughs, flu and possibly more serious illness
- Improve metabolism, help reduce fat storage and control appetite
- Slow down the aging process, decrease PMS and menstrual difficulties
- Aid dietary and protein synthesis – helping moods
- Prevent osteoporosis
- Maintain healthy blood pressure levels and lower LDL ('bad') cholesterol levels

Who should take this test?

Anyone with any of the following symptoms should take this test:

- PMS, cravings, weight gain or loss, abdominal obesity, inexplicable hunger
- Increased number of minor infections and viruses (e.g. thrush, cystitis, colds, flu)
- Poor concentration and memory, insomnia, depression, loss of libido
- Headaches, moods swings, anxiety, panic attacks, nervousness and/or irritability
- Chronic fatigue, low energy
- Digestive disturbances (diarrhoea, constipation, bloating, stomach aches/pains)
- Increased sensitivity to food, alcohol intolerance
- Skin problems (eczema, psoriasis)

Test Procedure

- The test kit will be posted to your house. The kit should arrive within 7-8 working days, please advise us if you do not receive your kit.
- The instructions are detailed so please read carefully before proceeding.
- Four salivary samples are collected over one day at specific times which need to be adhered to. Please perform the test on a day when you will be available at these times to produce the samples.
- Please follow the instructions for the courier pack provided with the kit. The courier service costs an additional £23. Please do not send samples on a Thursday or Friday to the UK to prevent delivery at the weekend.
- Please pay the lab directly enclosing your credit card details. If you would rather pay over the phone, please call the laboratory number when you are dispatching your kit. Have the kit code e.g. END01 to hand.
- The test results will be returned to your nutritionist within 3 weeks of receipt of the samples. Test results will be interpreted by your nutritionist and a protocol tailored accordingly.