



ADRENAL STRESS INDEX (ASI)

Stress can have a profound effect on our emotional and physical well-being, affecting everyone at some point and causing symptoms ranging from 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 4 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 'fight or flight' response and is an inherent survival mechanism. Once the cause of stress is removed, this process should normalize, 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 amongst others, fatigue, concentration lapses, irritability, lethargy, increased infections, reduced libido and vitality.

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, that becomes more harmful.

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 protein synthesis - helping mood
- Prevent osteoporosis
- Maintain healthy blood pressure levels and lower LDL 'bad' cholesterol levels

If you suffer from one or more of the following symptoms you should consider the ASI test

We are all individual and stress can cause many other symptoms

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

Nationwide Test Kit Service

Most of the tests involve simple kits that can be used in your own home. Some may require the help of a nurse or GP. If you cannot visit the laboratory, you can phone and arrange for your kit to be sent in the post. Once samples have been taken, you simply post the test kit back to the laboratory. We would encourage you to use guaranteed delivery and not to send kits over the weekend.

