

How to Get Out of Adrenal Exhaustion By Catherine Carrigan

Addressing the level of adrenal stress may be the most important step that we, as CHEK practitioners, take to empower our clients to achieving exceptional levels of health and fitness.

Why? Your body is primarily either catabolic – breaking down and quickly aging – or anabolic and capable of rebuilding.

If your level of adrenal stress is too high, you won't be able to build muscle. You'll wonder why you look the same even though you have spent weeks, months, or even years, working out with great dedication.

Those pesky little glands, each about the weight of a nickel and sitting on top of each kidney, can do quite a number on your health and fitness program if you don't know how to handle them properly.

Most clients in Atlanta who come to see me are either in Stage II (adaptation) or Stage III (exhaustion). The few who have been in Stage I (alarm) when they first walked into my office have invariably already made major changes in their lives – overcome illnesses, taken up meditation, changed careers and/or learned how to let go in their lives.

Everyone else seems puzzled as to why they can't lose weight, or why their back always hurts after they play golf. Most clients are clueless about the biochemical effects of adrenal stress. If they did, they'd understand the reason their thyroid has faltered, why their digestion has fallen apart, why they can't seem to metabolize carbohydrates or even protein and fat like they used to do.

By the time clients are Stage III, they are severely depleted.

I recommend a three-step process to help my clients get out of adrenal exhaustion:

- 1) Remove
- 2) Replenish
- 3) Repattern

Step 1. Remove

Let's say you have a client who is being beaten regularly by her husband. Your only choices to help her feel better are (A) put her on a corrective exercise program or (B) empower her to join a domestic violence support group. The answer is obvious – at least it was for me, when I dealt with a real-life situation like that. She listened to other battered women and developed to the courage to leave. In actual practice, we have many tools at our disposal. But the fact still remains – practitioners must remove the major stressors or improvement will not be likely.

On a biochemical level, the body doesn't know the difference between stress caused by an inflamed gut, an old high school football injury, or an unhappy marriage. It's all stress to the body.

Although removing the stress may seem like common sense, this is a step rarely taken by the average fitness trainer.

The fastest way to help clients get better is to identify and remove:

*Structural stress

*Emotional stress

*Biochemical/hormonal/nutritional stress

1. Assess each client's level of adrenal function with a saliva test, such as the one used by BioHealth Diagnostics in San Diego, CA. Such tests results provide powerful leverage to convince the people who are tired, worn-out, and aching to make the lifestyle changes necessary to feel better. The results also prove the times of day when athletes have the least amount of energy to exercise safely. For example, one of my clients was playing competitive tennis in the evenings. I was able to show her that even by 4 p.m. she had the energy that most people have at 10 o'clock at night. If she really wanted to win, I explained, she would have to rebuild her health.
2. During the CHEK postural assessment, identify all musculoskeletal stresses and develop a corrective exercise program to address them.
3. Use the Health Appraisal Questionnaire (HAQ) to discover which of 27 organ systems are most affected. If necessary, order further lab tests or refer out to an appropriate practitioner.
4. Use the diet and lifestyle questionnaires from the CHEK NLC program to identify ongoing emotional issues and dietary challenges. Often, these go together. An unhappy client will be self-medicating with food, alcohol, caffeine, and/or drugs.
5. Think beyond the obvious. Major sources of adrenal stress can be things that are not visible. For example, many have intestinal parasites but don't know it. One client I had scored high on a toxicity test. I encouraged her to go the doctor; she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Step 2. Replenish

In truth, depending on how exhausted someone has been and for how long, the rebuilding process could take months, if not years. It takes 120 days to build a whole new set of red blood cells. It takes 7 years to build a whole new body. Just like the truth about dieting, few want to hear that rebuilding takes time and effort.

Replenishing also requires a major paradigm shift. I encourage my clients to think of their lives like a big energy equation. Energy in must equal or exceed energy going out or they will experience major problems! "Work smarter, not harder," I tell them. "Do less and achieve more."

Here are a few recommendations that have made the most difference with my clients:

1. Take entire days off to do absolutely nothing. This advice comes as a shock to many, especially coming from a fitness professional. I use kinesiology to determine how many days of complete rest each client needs to get out of adrenal exhaustion. Typically, those in Stage III require 20 days or more. In some cases, I have written letters to bosses so my clients could take extended vacations. Most, however, just get out their calendars and plan rest time on days off or weekends. Although many clients balk at first, they become reformed stress addicts when they return, proselytizing to their friends about the benefits of lying in a hammock and reading House Beautiful. Complete rest is the fastest, cheapest way to replenish from adrenal exhaustion. Even

those with special health challenges find they recover more quickly. And by complete rest, I usually mean staying home to water the plants, reading funny books, taking hot baths and meditating. Watching television does not count as it stresses the adrenals. 2. Eat 5-6 balanced mini-meals each day of organic food according to your ideal metabolic type. As Dr. David Hawkins, M.D., a fellow kinesiologist and author of Power vs. Force puts it, wisdom consists of simply avoiding that which makes you go weak and choosing consciousness or energies equal to or higher than your own. Replenishing requires us to eat the freshest food, surround ourselves with the most loving people in the most nurturing environment. 3. Choose exercise that restores energy to the body. Qi Gong, Tai Chi, and yoga are all designed to balance the nervous system and replenish chi or prana. The CHEK Zone exercises and simple walking in sunlight at 0-40% intensity may also be appropriate.

Step 3. Repattern

This is a process I studied initially as a Brain Gym practitioner and which my mentor in healing, Sue Maes of the Achievement and Learning Center in London, Ontario, Canada, has simplified. Repatterning was originally developed for children with severe developmental handicaps. I tell my clients, "If it works for comatose brain-injured people, it will probably work for you."

A story: The effects of repatterning are quite profound. There is no placebo effect. I have had successful results even with clients who didn't want to do it, such as one young man who can now see and walk better after an automobile accident broke two of his legs, one arm and damaged his brain.

Years ago, I had a new client and the only time I had available for our initial consultation was 6 a.m. At 6:30 that morning, she told me she was suicidal. I put down my paperwork and stopped to show her how to repattern. I asked her to repattern every day until I saw her again. She came back less than a week later and had taken herself off a powerful anti-anxiety medication. She was no longer in panic and no longer suicidal.

Most people have a dominant brain hemisphere. Under stress, the non-dominant hemisphere is 75- 85% shut down. In a homolateral (one-sided) brain state, left brain people will be stuck in anxiety, while right brain people will be depressed and stuck in their feelings.

Repatterning has a long term beneficial effect on mood. It can also improve whole body coordination, as the opposite side of the brain controls the opposite side of the body. Any time you, as an exercise professional, have a client who is unable to perform tasks on one side of the body, suspect a homolateral brain state and get them to repattern. You will be pleased with the results!

As any physicist will tell you, electricity equals chemistry equals physiology. It takes the average person 10 weeks of repatterning everyday, twice a day, to integrate both hemispheres of the brain, according to E.E.G. research by Sue Maes in Canada. When that happens, E.E.G. patterns will be even on both sides of the brain, both sides of the body work well together and there is less neurological stress in the system. To repattern, follow all three steps in sequential order without stopping:

Step 1. Lie on your back. Put your arms over your head. Look up to the left to access the right side of your brain. Cross crawl by bringing your opposite hand to your opposite knee. Hum in a monotone to access the auditory centers of the brain. (Do not use a tune, as tunes access the left hemisphere.) Continue for one minute.

Step 2. Continue to lie on your back. Look down to your right to access the left hemisphere. Bring your arms by your side. Begin homolateral crawling by bending the right knee to the chest and lifting the right arm straight over your head. Repeat with the opposite side. As you do the homolateral crawl, simultaneously count backwards from thirty to access the logical, linear part of the brain.

Step 3. Without making a sound, continue to lie on your back and cross crawl. Move your eyes in a big circle. As you look up, you are accessing the visual centers. As you look down you access the kinesthetic senses. As you look left and right, you access the auditory portions of the brain. Continue for one minute.

Repatterning takes a total of three minutes. I encourage clients to repattern every morning and again before they go to bed.

As clients implement the three steps of healing their adrenals – removing their stresses, replenishing themselves and repatterning – they will once again enjoy the challenge of hard exercise and finally begin to see and feel the results they have been wanting, a stronger body and more relaxed mind.

Resources

www.brainwiz.com, The Achievement and Learning Center

www.braingym.com, The Educational Kinesiology Foundation

www.biodia.com, Biohealth Diagnostics

powered by Aurora, a CMS from Jaze

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