



Fatigue, energy, the adrenals and thyroid hormones

Fatigue is far and away the most common complaint that I encounter in my [medical practice](#). Usually it has a lot to do with the hormone cortisol, produced by the adrenal glands, and under-active thyroid hormone function. Aside from diminished energy and light-headedness when standing up, a lack of cortisol can trigger a range of debilitating maladies including anxiety, moodiness, depression, irritability and agitation. In addition to not having energy those who aren't served by thyroid hormones might struggle to lose weight, are slowed mentally and emotionally and might find that they have really cold hands and feet.

Interestingly a genetic condition known as mucocutaneous candidiasis can be associated with adrenal dysfunction and reduced cortisol production. While this disorder is rare it is possible that candidiasis or yeast overgrowth which spills over from the gut can even compromise adrenal function in those who do not have this disease.

Cortisol and thyroid hormones have an interdependent relationship. We need cortisol to make thyroid hormones, which in turn stimulate cortisol activity.

Standard blood tests won't always uncover the underlying reasons for reduced cortisol levels and compromised thyroid activity. As I've indicated before in this newsletter, optimising the pillars of health outlined in my e-Book '[You Have The Power](#),' is fundamental to maximising hormone function, especially that of cortisol and thyroid hormones. Finding a practitioner who appreciates this would make it easier to identify the cause of the malfunction before it leads to serious incapacity.

Hormones and Ageing

As ageing sees a decline in hormone production, it seems to make a whole lot of sense to delay and even possibly reverse the ageing process by taking hormones. This is the core blueprint of many [anti-ageing clinics](#) including my own.

Research suggests that this approach could do with a large serving of caution. Hormones function by speeding things up and making them grow. When we make cells work at a faster rate free radicals, which can be damaging, multiply. Encouraging things to grow might see the flourishing of abnormal cells that we don't need.

Nature in its infinite wisdom might be turning off hormones with ageing to protect us. If the decline in hormones results in the diminishing of our quality of life then taking these to improve our functionality needs to be accompanied by those [strategies](#) that offset any of the potential adverse consequences of embarking on such an endeavour.

Hormones and Weight Gain

Weight gain in men might have something to do with declining testosterone, growth hormone and thyroid hormone levels. Recent research indicates that it might also be connected with the female hormone oestrogen. Hormones work by means of attaching to a receptor like a key fitting into a lock and opening a door. It gets a little complex as there are two receptors for oestrogen, the alpha and beta receptor, situated right next to each other, kind of like a husband and wife. As it happens in the real world each of these attempts to establish a greater influence.

When the alpha receptor is activated, stimulation by oestrogen leads to the deposition of fat in subcutaneous tissue, like the thighs and the buttocks, the so-called healthy fat zones. Cellulite accumulation might be every woman's aesthetic nightmare but fat in this area is called healthy as it is not associated with the development of diabetes or heart disease. In post-menopausal woman the beta-receptors are in the ascendancy resulting in fat accumulation around the abdomen and internal organs like the liver, leading to the so-called fatty liver, and this is decidedly unhealthy.

Research suggests that men are alpha receptor dominant. Scientific evidence indicates that for the most part taking oestrogen helps post-menopausal women to lose weight. This might appear to contradict the notion that oestrogen deposits fat, wherever that may be. However what oestrogen also does is stimulate the burning of sugar and fat and it is possible that with oestrogen administration these functions predominate.

Eternal Health Medical Centre

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