



THE Cortisol Solution

A Complete Guide to Help Women Over 40 Stress Less,
Boost Metabolism, and Regain their Energy

INCLUDES 12 ADRENAL SUPPORTING RECIPES!

CREATED BY

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UNLOCK YOUR HEALTH POTENTIAL

M E E T

Dr. Joey Shulman

Hello and welcome! In case you're not familiar with me, I'm a holistic nutritionist, best-selling author, Cityline health expert, and I am the founder of Shulman Health and Weight Loss.

My passion for natural healthcare and nutrition have been the focus of my career for over fifteen years. My philosophy of **"improve the quality of your food to improve the quality of your life"** has enhanced the health of thousands of people across North America. As a three-time national best selling author and a well-known media personality, I am a proud authority on weight loss, health and nutrition for women.

I created this guide because too many women are out there needlessly suffering without talking about all the options available to them. When we're properly educated, we are in the best position possible to make choices about our health.

Please note that this guide is for educational and informational purposes only and solely as a self-help tool for your own use. I am not providing direct medical, psychological, or nutrition therapy advice. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat any health problems or illnesses without consulting your own medical practitioner. Always seek the advice of your own medical practitioner and/or mental health provider about your specific health situation.





Cortisol:

The “rushing woman’s hormone” that matters!

Let’s face it, we now live in a very stressful time. People text and phone us at all hours of the day, the 24/7 news cycle never quits, and we are surrounded by a constellation of environmental toxins that increases our body’s stress response.

I have seen so many people fix their diets, take their supplements and exercise, but if they do not work on fixing their nervous system dysregulation and balancing cortisol, it does not work.

The good news is, you can change and shift your body into a homeostatic balance. In fact, your nervous system and adrenal function is mailable which means it can be improved and “re-wired” with the right approach.

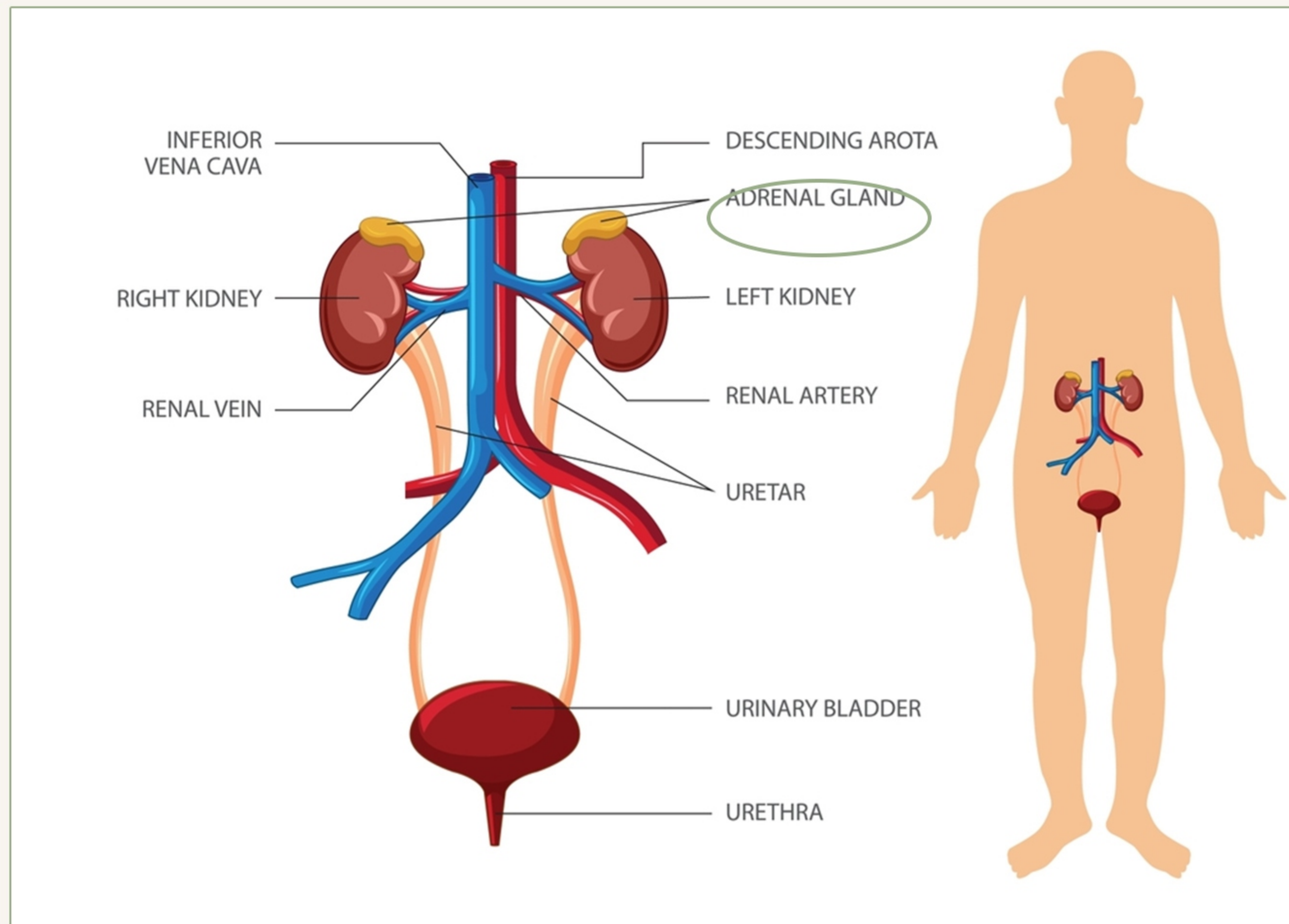
Do any of the following symptoms sound like you?

- Constantly exhausted and unable to lose weight no matter what you do?
- Everything feels rushed and urgent
- Constantly scrolling on your phone
- Picking up your phone first thing in the AM and sleeping with your phone beside your bed
- Grabbing coffee first thing in the AM for energy
- Often feeling stressed out and anxious even when nothing is going on
- Waking up during the night and not able to go back to sleep
- Getting stuck in over thinking or finding it hard to make a decision
- Feel “wired and tired” at the same time

It's not you -it's your
adrenal glands and cortisol!

The Adrenal Glands and Cortisol

Adrenal glands, also known as suprarenal glands, are small, triangular-shaped glands located on top of both of your kidneys. Adrenal glands produce hormones that help regulate your metabolism, immune system, blood pressure, response to stress and other essential functions.



Since many of us live with round-the-clock stress, the adrenal glands can become exhausted, and their ability to produce these hormones decreases. It is the chronic nature of stress (or perceived stress for that matter) that typically results in adrenal fatigue.

In terms of stress levels, it is all about perception. What is stressful to one person may be different to another. Some people may find small situations like losing their wallet or being in traffic 10/10 stressful, while others have significant stressors such as health issues, loss of a loved one, job stress or a child who is struggling.

Wherever you are in your journey, the goal is to protect your adrenal glands and cortisol levels to help you heal and navigate your hormones.

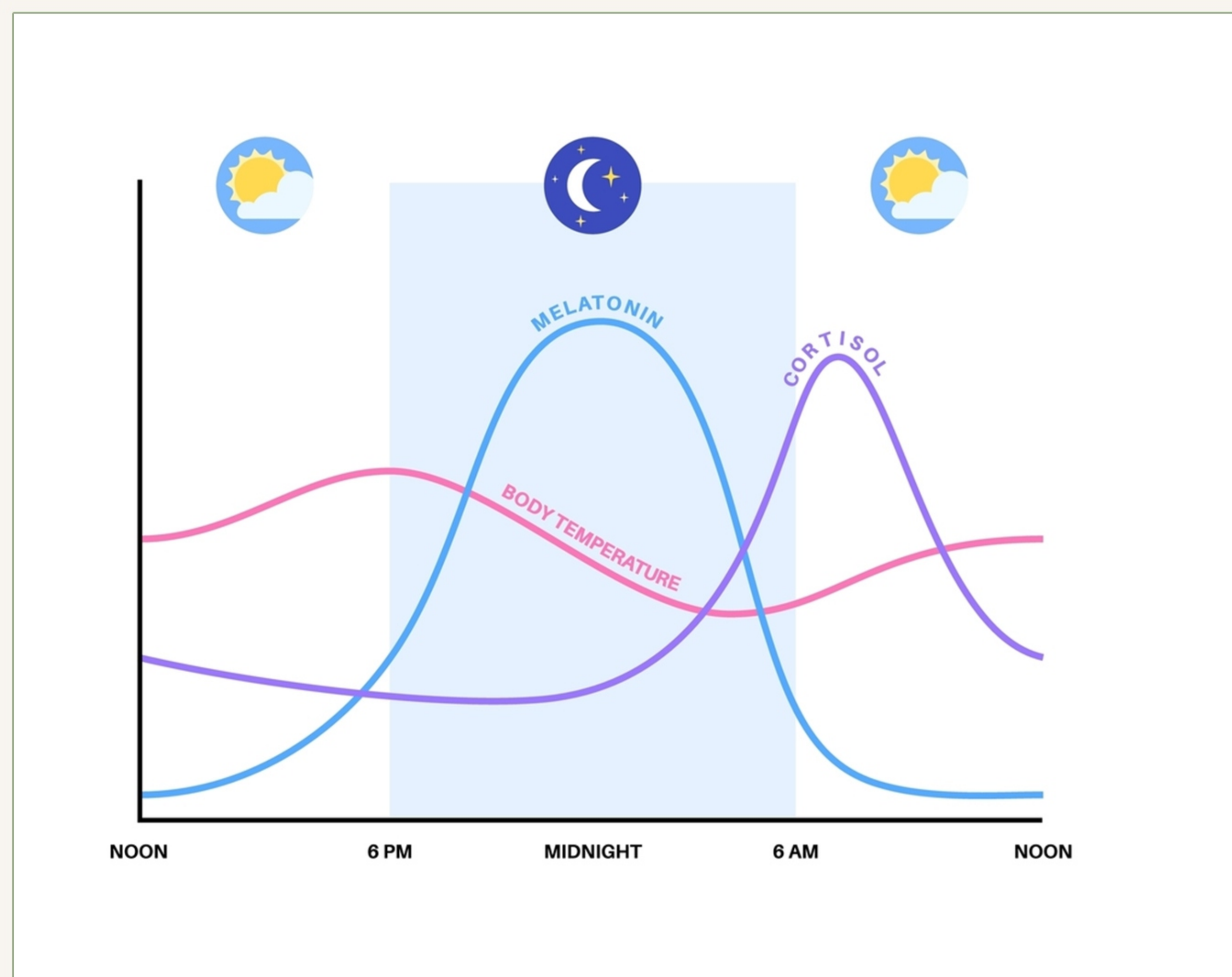
I cannot say this strongly enough - your hormones are the most powerful chemical messengers in your body!

What Exactly is Adrenal Fatigue?

Adrenal fatigue is a relatively new diagnosis first proposed in 1998 by Dr James Wilson, a naturopath and chiropractor. The theory is that **over stimulation of the adrenal glands from chronic stress can lead to an inconsistent level of cortisol (the stress hormone) in the bloodstream.** While conventional medicine is just catching up to the effect of cortisol and stress and often does not recognize adrenal fatigue as a real condition, natural health care practitioners and functional doctors do.

I can tell you from personally working with thousands of women with adrenal fatigue – it is real, it can be debilitating, **but it can also be reversed with the proper steps.**

In short, adrenal fatigue occurs when the body starts to secrete the wrong amount of cortisol at the wrong time of day. Cortisol levels should typically be elevated in the morning and then reduce as the day goes on. The lowest level of cortisol on average is at midnight. With adrenal fatigue, you will see cortisol rising at night. Have you ever had the experience when you get a burst of energy and cannot sleep in the evening? This is often a sign of heightened cortisol levels.



At the extreme stage of adrenal fatigue, cortisol levels do not have any bounces -they tend to remain flat-lined. In this stage, your adrenal glands have been pumping out extra cortisol for so long that they've become exhausted. They can't produce stress hormones in the quantities you need to feel energized or even alert.

How to Test for Adrenal Fatigue and Common Symptoms

You can test cortisol by using blood, saliva or a urine test. Saliva or urine tends to be the most accurate as you can test it several times throughout the day. If you do wish to have your cortisol levels checked, talk to a naturopath or function medical doctor about the best option. Having a DUTCH test done is one way to monitor your hormone and adrenal levels.

Studies indicate that adrenal fatigue symptoms can include:

- Autoimmune conditions
- Chronic fatigue (always feeling tired)
- Brain fog
- Hair loss
- Hormone imbalance
- Weakened stress response
- Insulin resistance
- Light headedness
- Decreased sex drive/libido
- Moodiness and irritability
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Muscle or bone loss
- Skin ailments
- Sleep disturbances/sleep apnea
- Weight gain and belly fat storage
- Sweet and salty food cravings
- Loss of appetite

It is important to note that no 2 people are the same and adrenal fatigue can present in several different ways.

Adrenal Fatigue Symptoms



**Autoimmune
Conditions**



Chronic Fatigue



Brain Fog



Hair Loss



Hormone Imbalance



**Weakened Stress
Response**



Insulin Resistance



Light Headedness



Muscle or Bone Loss



Skin Ailments



Sleep Disturbances



Weight Gain



**Sweet & Salty Food
Cravings**



**Decreased Libido /
Sex Drive**



**Moodiness /
Irritability**



Depression

A little more about your nervous system...

Whenever I talk about the body and root cause, I remind my clients that the body is likened to an orchestra. If one system is “off” (i.e. your gut) – it tips over into another system (i.e. your brain or your hormone production). As your body ages– the symphony and synchronicity of your systems becomes even more important to proper balance and wellness.

Your autonomic nervous system (ANS) is one of the “master” systems in your body that can greatly impact your health, both positively or negatively. The ANS is a network of nerves that regulates unconscious body processes. It is responsible for regulating involuntary body functions, such as heartbeat, blood flow, breathing, and digestion.

Because of this, the autonomic nervous system is also sometimes known by another name: the involuntary nervous system and is made up of 3 parts:

➤ **Parasympathetic nervous system:**

This part of the autonomic nervous system helps maintain normal body functions and conserves physical resources. This division also performs such tasks as controlling the bladder, slowing heart rate, and constricting eye pupils.

The parasympathetic mode is one where we want to spend a lot of our time being in. It is the “**rest, digest and recover**” mode.

➤ **Sympathetic nervous system:**

The sympathetic nervous system is our “**fight, fight and freeze**” response that performs tasks such as speeding up heart rate, raising blood pressure, dilating pupils and relaxing the bladder.

➤ **Enteric nervous system:**

This is the part of the autonomic nervous system that controls the gastrointestinal tract and the digestion of food.

The parasympathetic and sympathetic responses have opposite effects. The issue arises when we get “stuck” in a sympathetic response and our body feels that it is always in a state of emergency. It is the feeling of being both “*wired and tired*” at the same time. I cannot tell you how often I am seeing this stage in peri and postmenopausal women. If you are experiencing this, it is important to not normalize these symptoms or simply write them off to age. Keep in mind, it takes some mindfulness, nutritional support, and often proper supplementation to normalize again. It took time to get to this level of burn out, it will take some time to heal.

It is important to note, not all stress is bad.

A certain level of “good” stress helps us adapt to our environment and pushes us to become resilient and excel. The stress that becomes a problem is chronic mild to moderate stress that far too many North Americans suffer from.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, chronic stress can affect your quality of life and even dampen your immune system which is why it is important to incorporate natural stress relievers into your regular routine to help cope.

Fight or Flight

The fight-or-flight process is crucial and lifesaving under the right circumstances. If we did not have these instincts and were not so efficient at utilizing this stress response, humans would not be here today.

But in modern society, we activate this response too often and for too long. We are no longer running from lions, of course; we are instead fighting small and large stressors *all the time*. Anything from traffic to the loss of a loved one are stressors. Toxins, technology, the economy, information overload, overscheduling, our family and coworkers, study, worry, depression, and fear all rank high too.

The chronic, perpetual activation of this fight-or-flight system leads to overproduction of stress hormones, and this creates a pattern of upregulation, decreased stress tolerance, and possibly the exhaustion of the entire Stress Response System, aka Adrenal Fatigue.

How to improve adrenal function, lower cortisol and feel your best naturally as you age!

There are several different ways to lower cortisol and enter a parasympathetic mode. The good news is you can and will heal. The key with re-storing adrenal health is repetition and patience.

I often tell my clients to start noticing the “**glimmers**” that indicate they are feeling better. For example, brain fog may lift for a few hours, aches and pains start to subside or nighttime bloating improves. Perhaps you start to lose weight more easily or find you are less anxious throughout the day.

Of all the lessons I have learned being in natural healthcare for over 20 years is that **healing does not often happen in a straight line**. If it helps, record your “glimmers” in a food journal to help notice your patterns. Most of all, trust the process. In a short time, you will start to notice a remarkable difference.



The Adrenal Diet in a Nutshell

Your diet is either working for or against you. In terms of adrenal support, it is important to remove anything that may tax your system and cortisol levels.

Foods to Minimize or Remove

Caffeine

I understand that most people love their morning coffee, I do as well. However, caffeine can overstimulate cortisol and leave you feeling jittery all day. Too much coffee can also bounce around blood sugar levels and create feelings of hunger and cravings later in the day.

If you do need your 1 cup of java, try to match it with food in the morning and limit your intake of caffeine from noon on. You can also try swapping out coffee and drinking matcha or green tea as both are high in antioxidants. Green tea and matcha both contain L-theanine that leaves you feeling calm and alert at the same time. However, in very late stage adrenal fatigue (i.e. burnout), even green tea can cause swings in blood sugars and create nervous system irritation. If you do fall into this category, opt for herbal teas. Two of my favorite herbal teas that are wonderful for liver health and detox are lemon balm tea and chicory root tea by Traditional Medicinals.



Sugars and Artificial Sweeteners

Along with having zero nutritive value, sugar and artificial sweeteners have both been shown to negatively affect mood, blood sugars/insulin levels and can thereby contribute to agitation of the adrenal glands. Remove any processed foods with added sugar and any artificial sweeteners such as aspartame, saccharin, or sucralose (found in diet drinks and other foods such as yogurt). Substitute with sweet spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, cocoa powder, vanilla extract), monk fruit sugar, honey, maple syrup or a small amount of coconut sugar.



Refined Carbohydrates

If you are feeling overwhelmed and stressed out, you tend to grab for the wrong types of carbohydrates such as sugary and starchy foods to feel better fast. Unfortunately, these types of foods are problematic with adrenal fatigue and will often contribute to weight gain and more brain fog and fatigue. The key is to avoid refined carbohydrates and stick to vegetables, fruits, and a modest amount (1/2 cup cooked) of non-processed whole grain options (quinoa, brown rice).



Inflammatory Fats

Any foods that cause inflammation such as deep-fried foods, trans fatty acids or vegetable oils can exacerbate adrenal fatigue. The “good fats” such as monounsaturated fats and essential fatty acids will help lower inflammation and are recommended.



Foods to Add for Optimal Adrenal Health

- Coconut oil
- Olives
- Avocado and other healthy fats
- Cruciferous vegetables (cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, etc.)
- Fatty fish (e.g., wild-caught salmon)
- Free-range chicken and turkey
- Bone broth
- Nuts, such as walnuts and almonds
- Seeds, such as pumpkin, chia and flax
- Kelp and seaweed
- Celtic or Himalayan Sea salt
- Fermented foods rich in probiotics
- Chaga and cordyceps medicinal mushrooms



Lifestyle Techniques for Adrenal Health

I have seen many people change their diet and their supplements, but their cortisol levels are not changing. Why? The simple reason is they have not changed their stressful thought pattern. In short, they are still reacting the same old way and their body is still experiencing a continual fight or flight response.

If this is you (and trust me I have been there), do not be hard on yourself. Your mind tends to fall into a pattern of thought, good or bad, and tends to loop. The intimate connection between the mind and your physical health is real, so we want to make sure nothing is holding you back. Your subconscious emotions, previous programming, and self-limiting thoughts (i.e. *“I will never lose weight”* or *“I will never heal”* or *“It is all because of my genetics”*) may be telling your body a different story. In short, change your thoughts, change your health.

As mentioned, the key is repetition, mindfulness and being kind to yourself. The steps below are powerful ways to enter parasympathetic mode and feel relaxed (remember, start looking for the *glimmers!*).

Stress Management Techniques

- ▶ Engaging in stress-reducing activities can significantly lower cortisol levels:
- ▶ Practicing mindfulness, meditation, or yoga to calm the nervous system
- ▶ Incorporating deep breathing exercises or diaphragmatic breathing
- ▶ Trying relaxation techniques like reading or taking a warm bath before bedtime.



Sleep Optimization

Improving sleep quality is essential for cortisol regulation:

- Maintaining a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time daily.
- Creating a calm, relaxing bedroom environment
- Avoiding electronic devices before bedtime due to their blue light emissions



Exercise and Physical Activity

Regular exercise can help manage cortisol levels:

- Engaging in moderate physical activity regularly
- Balancing intense workouts with restorative exercises like yoga or tai chi



Supplementation

While a balanced diet is ideal, certain supplements may help reduce cortisol levels:

- Omega-3 fatty acids, which have shown promise in reducing cortisol in studies
- Vitamin C, vitamin B5, and magnesium
- Adaptogenic herbs like Rhodiola



Note: It's important to consult with a healthcare professional before starting any new supplement regimen

Lifestyle Adjustments

Additional lifestyle changes that can help balance cortisol include:

- Limiting alcohol consumption
- Practicing laughter, which can promote endorphin release and lower stress
- Caring for gut health through a balanced diet and probiotic-rich foods



By incorporating these natural strategies, women can work towards balancing their cortisol levels and managing stress more effectively. Remember that individual responses may vary, so it's essential to find a personalized approach that works best for each woman's unique needs and circumstances.

Before you get to the recipes in the next section, I want to make sure you know there are two ways you can work with me!

For bioindividual care, and to ensure you're receiving personalized plans designed for your specific needs, **Get a free consultation at Shulman Health and Weight Loss.**

For proven methods you can do on your own, at your own pace, **check out my online programs** to help women manage symptoms of perimenopause and menopause so that they can look and feel their best.

Cortisol Solution Recipes



As you get started on your journey of supporting your adrenal health, I've included some of my most popular recipes. You'll be delighted to learn that supporting adrenal health can be a delicious endeavor! I've provided options for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and I hope these recipes inspire you to create adrenal supporting recipes of your own!

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