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Actionable advice you can trust from the top wellness experts

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IS STRESS GETTING THE BEST OF YOU?

If you feel wiped out and overwhelmed by your daily activities, your adrenal glands could be burned out...



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If you get overwhelmed by daily stress and often feel more tired than you think you should, you're not alone. But don't be too quick to simply shrug off these symptoms as the price we pay for today's fast-paced world.

You may be suffering from adrenal fatigue. While feeling stressed-out and exhausted could point to a variety of conditions ranging from sleep apnea and anemia to heart problems and depression, adrenal fatigue should definitely be on your radar as your doctor investigates your symptoms.

There is no test for adrenal fatigue, so it's a controversial diagnosis and some doctors don't believe that the condition is "real." But based on my clinical experience with thousands of patients, I am convinced that it is real—and treatable.

What is adrenal fatigue?

To understand adrenal fatigue, it's important to review the function of your adrenal glands. Located above each kidney, these walnut-sized glands pump out *adrenaline*, the fight-or-flight hormone that speeds your heart, boosts your blood pressure and shunts blood from your gut to your muscles—readying you for instant action. If your stress levels don't let

up day after day, then your body's endocrine system kicks into even higher gear, triggering a hormonal cascade that includes the release of the "stress hormone" *cortisol*, followed by the hormone *glucagon*, which raises your blood sugar to supply your brain and muscles with more energy to cope with the extended physiological demands.

The problem is that your hunter-gatherer body hasn't yet evolved to adapt to the chronic stress of 21st-century living. After years of non-stop stress—marked by cortisol levels so chronically high that they eventually get depleted to chronically *low* levels—the adrenal glands become literally exhausted...the hallmark of adrenal fatigue.

Red flags for adrenal fatigue

If your doctor has taken your medical history and ordered blood tests but hasn't found a cause for your symptoms, check to see if you have these red flags for adrenal fatigue. *Beyond feeling overwhelmed by stress and tired all the time, do you...*

- **Feel intensely irritable when you're hungry?** Exhausted adrenal glands can't pump out enough cortisol to trigger glucagon production, so your blood sugar levels are often low,

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