



In This Issue

Stress, Food, &
Hormone Balance:

The Story of
Cortisol

Toys for Tots

Wishing You a
Happy Healthy
Holiday!



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Ageless & Wellness News

Volume 2, Number 24

Dear Ageless and Wellness,



"Most processed foods are literally "designed" in a food science lab to elicit overwhelming biochemical signals, compelling us to eat more. These nutrient-poor foods made with synthetic chemicals overstimulate our taste buds and alter our

hormones in surprisingly widespread ways."

-- C.W. Randolph, Jr. M.D.

In this issue, we continue our series on how our food choices affect healthy hormone balance with **"Stress, Food, & Hormone Balance: The Story of Cortisol."**

We wish you a Happy Healthy Holiday! **Check out our special at the online Wellness Store: Get a \$25 Gift Card for every \$100 you spend, and share the gift of good health!**

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The Story of Cortisol

Are you experiencing holiday stress yet? In this issue, we discuss another hormone that is affected by the foods you eat: cortisol, sometimes called the "stress hormone." In the first article of our Food & Hormones series, we discussed insulin resistance, and in the second article we focused on leptin resistance. Keep in mind that no hormone works in isolation. Sometimes a spike in one hormone leads to a drop in another, and vice versa. Your body does its best to cope with the difficulties of an imbalanced system.

Remember that every bite of food you put into your body is either making you healthier -- or not! What you choose to eat is either helping healthy hormonal production, or contributing to hormonal imbalance. Hormones control our digestion, our moods, our energy, our libido, our metabolism, and more. When we do not eat food with the nutrients our bodies need, we cannot expect our bodies to effectively produce the hormones we need. Without the "building blocks" for healthy hormones, our bodies cannot maintain hormonal balance!

The season of "giving" has just begun, so let's give ourselves a reminder: We are what we eat! At the AWMC, we believe that eating healthy good food is an important act of self-care, a gift that you can give to yourself every day! We can give you the gift of knowledge -- the rest is up to you. Remember that we always recommend you avoid, or at least minimize, "processed foods." Most processed foods are literally "designed" in a food science lab to elicit overwhelming biochemical signals compelling us to eat more. These nutrient-poor foods made with synthetic chemicals overstimulate our taste buds and alter our hormones in surprisingly widespread ways. Think about it: fruit-flavored candy is far sweeter than real fruit. Potato chips are saltier and more addictive than real potatoes! Why? These are well-engineered products, not real food. It is easy for our bodies to get "dazzled" by the "supernormal stimuli" in processed foods, and we get fooled into eating them again and again.

Cortisol, the "stress hormone," is secreted from the adrenal glands and has several important functions. Cortisol works in a "circadian rhythm," related to the light-dark/wake-sleep systems of your body. It's supposed to be a bit higher in the morning to help you feel wakeful and start your day, and then levels should decline throughout the day, lowering in the evening to help you wind down before sleep. Cortisol is also released in response to a stress event -- anything from the momentary panic of your toddler reaching for a hot pan on the stove, to an intense fight-or-flight response. Cortisol raises your blood sugar, increases your blood pressure, and reduces inflammation so that you can rescue the toddler or fight off the assailant. Elevated cortisol levels due to stress events are actually supposed to be beneficial, protective -- and infrequent.

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Here's where the trouble starts: when your blood sugar is too low, or when it rises high and crashes low after a blood sugar spike due to insulin or leptin resistance, your body pumps out more cortisol. And when constant stress puts your adrenal system into overdrive, your body also pumps out more cortisol. When your body feels as though it is stressed ALL THE TIME, cortisol never drops back into the normal range. Chronically elevated cortisol levels can lead to adrenal fatigue, which destroys healthy muscle and bone, slows down healing and normal cell regeneration, impairs digestion, causes abdominal weight gain, dulls mental processes, interferes with healthy endocrine function, and weakens your immune system.

So what happens when age-related estrogen dominance, combined with insulin resistance, leptin resistance, and elevated cortisol levels converge? Some of you may be experiencing this "perfect storm" right now, with symptoms such as excessive weight gain, fatigue, insomnia, and decreased libido. How can you get back in balance?

We always recommend that you have all your hormone levels checked as a starting point; this helps establish a baseline for evaluating your symptoms. Biodidentical hormones can help restore deficiencies in sex hormones (estrogen, progesterone, or testosterone). Balancing high estrogen can help you lose weight, which reduces the amount of fat you have in storage. Patients often sleep better when hormone-related symptoms like hot flashes are under control -- and better sleep further reduces leptin imbalance. When you start paying attention to the foods you eat, by reducing processed foods and "eating clean" with healthy fats and low sugar, insulin levels return to normal. When you feel better, it is easier to manage your stress levels...and you can finally experience the full benefits of hormone balance.

We wish you a Happy Healthy Holiday!

Getting in the Holiday Spirit!



Our team kicked off the holiday season with a creative

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Dr. Randolph



Click [HERE](#) to learn
more about
Dr. Randolph and
our team of
clinicians!

project at Painting with a Twist in Ponte Vedra Beach. Everyone painted their own holiday scene and enjoyed each others' company! We feel very fortunate to work together helping others with people we respect and trust!



We Wish YOU a Very Happy Healthy Holiday!

Please let us know how we can help you on your path to optimal aging and wellness!

To Your Health,

Dr. Randolph

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