

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white sleeveless dress, is running barefoot on a sandy beach. She is holding a large white cloth aloft with both hands, and it is blowing in the wind, creating a large, flowing shape against the blue sky. The background shows the ocean with white-capped waves under a clear blue sky.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO ADRENAL HEALTH



Welcome to your Free Guide to Adrenal Health!



Welcome

Your interest in my recent summit tells me that adrenal health is something you need to know more about. Usually, that means your life is being impacted by symptoms of adrenal dysfunction, and the most important thing you are focusing on right now is feeling better. It's time to show you how to take control of your life and get back to being strong, vibrant and healthy.

This comprehensive e-book can help! I've tried to make it as uncomplicated and simple to use as possible, and I've loaded it with strategies proven to help you feel good and regain lost energy. The information I'm giving you is based on the most up to date research there is, as well as decades of experience helping women just like you balance out their adrenals and get their lives back.

It's important to remember that healing is more like a marathon than a sprint. Your symptoms didn't appear overnight, and you won't get rid of them overnight either, especially when you take a natural approach. But being open to changing your lifestyle, and willing to try something new will give you positive results -- without adverse side effects! Once you try my approach, I have confidence that the way you feel will be the evidence you need to show it works.

I appreciate the faith you are showing in my expertise and years of experience. I promise you won't go through this alone. My goal is to support women in their journey back to good health - starting with you!

Yours in health,

Marcelle Pick

OB/GYN NP

PS: I am always interested in hearing what works for you. Let me know if you have suggestions for improving this e-book by emailing me at support@marcellepick.com

Making change work for YOU!

One of the most common things I hear from women in my practice is that all their dueling roles -- wife, mother, employee, daughter, partner, sister, and friend (to name just a few) - leave them exhausted and feeling overwhelmed.

I want to help alleviate that feeling -- not make it worse. That's why when I'm talking to women about what they can do to take control of their health, I walk them through it one small change at a time. That's what I do in this guide. I'll give you baby steps to take, one at a time, as you are ready.

You might be ready to jump right in, tackling all the various elements at once. If so, great - go for it! If not, however, you can still get started. This isn't an all or nothing proposition. I want to give you as much information as I can to show you that whether you are diving into a pool, ready to make the big changes that can transform your life or dipping your toe in the water by trying a smaller change, both put the power and control back where they belong: with YOU.

Quick steps to get you started:

Consider supplemental support. When you are battling adrenal imbalance, this can make the most difference in the least amount of time. I recommend a high-quality multivitamin, Omega-3s, and often a targeted adrenal support formula. You can read more on page ??.

Read through my lifestyle and dietary recommendations to see which small changes can work for you right now. These can be found on page ??

Your body is a powerful organism that has both the internal desire and the ability to heal itself. But it needs the right support.



Where do your symptoms originate?

Your symptoms aren't the real problem -- they're simply a message from your body that there is a problem. So often, the symptoms you feel are a signal that the critical hormones in your body are out of balance.

Your body has so many hormones beyond the sex hormones (estrogen, progesterone and testosterone) that many women immediately think of. These sex hormones are actually relatively minor in the grand scheme of things. I don't mean they're unimportant. All hormones are important to the way you feel. But there are "major" hormones that have a greater role in your body's cells and systems. Some, you literally can't live without!

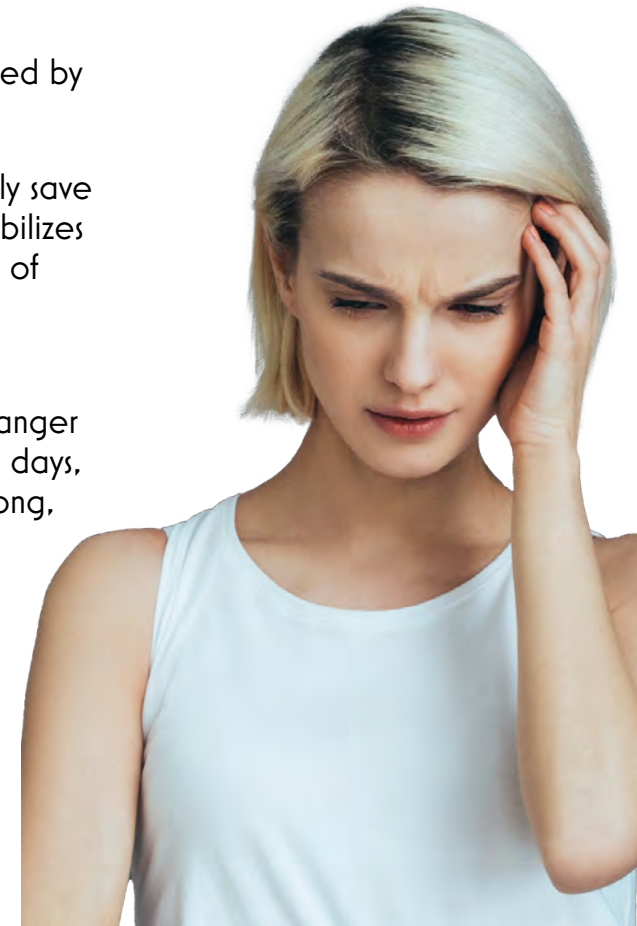
Two of these major hormones are cortisol and adrenaline. Both are produced by the adrenal glands, which is why adrenal health is so important.

Cortisol, when released in response to a life-threatening stressor, can literally save your life. It converts fats and protein into energy, which keeps you alert, stabilizes heartbeat and blood pressure, and fights inflammation. This is great in times of temporary stress, but when cortisol levels stay high, problems persist.

The big issue is that relatively minor stressors also prompt the release of this hormone; your body simply can't distinguish between real and perceived danger in moments of stress. And with stress coming at us from every direction these days, it's more and more common for cortisol levels to stay elevated for far too long, impacting your health in myriad ways.

What happens when cortisol levels are constantly elevated?

Having high levels of cortisol for extended periods of time can create



multiple issues that ultimately result in your body's cry for help through the symptoms you experience. These include:

Impeding normal cell regeneration and healing

Disrupt healthy function of your endocrine system including your thyroid

Redirecting molecules needed to make other vital hormones

Deteriorating immune system functioning

Difficulty with digestion, metabolism and mental functioning

When your adrenals constantly get a distress call, it can become more and more difficult for these hard-working glands to produce their key hormones, including cortisol, DHEA, and the sex hormones. This often impacts women even more severely in mid-life as they enter perimenopause or menopause, since they rely on their adrenals to keep sex hormones level in that time of transition. If you suddenly find yourself unable to keep up with the pace you've maintained for years, adrenal dysfunction could be to blame.

Elevated cortisol output impacts so many aspects of your health beyond hormone levels as well. It may cause weight gain, change your appearance and how you age, affect energy levels, your immune system, cognitive functioning, mood, and bone health.

So many women come to me frustrated because their health care provider hasn't found anything out of the ordinary by conventional medical standards, but you KNOW your symptoms are telling you something isn't right.

Extreme fatigue, intense sugar and caffeine cravings, chronic insomnia and the other symptoms you're living with every day are not normal -- and there IS something you can do about it. But first, you have to understand what's going on.

A big question is what has changed so significantly in the lives of women to make so many of us experience these uncomfortable and disruptive symptoms of adrenal



imbalance? The easy answer is stress. Stress is no longer isolated to life-threatening situations – it’s everywhere!

These symptoms aren’t to be ignored – they are your wake up call! Your body is screaming out for help, and it’s time to listen and take action. Reading this guide is an important first step – I can walk you through what is happening, and be sure you understand the best steps you can take to feel like yourself again.

It’s important to know that adrenal imbalance doesn’t always present the same way. It builds slowly, and when left unattended to, you’ll progress through three distinct stages. It’s best if you catch adrenal imbalance in the early stages, so you don’t get to the point where you simply cannot get out of bed at all.

Three Stages of Adrenal Dysfunction

1

“WIRED”

You can’t slow down, even when you want to. You feel “wired” all the time, even when you also feel exhausted

You find yourself feeling worn out, but can’t seem to stop. There’s so much adrenaline and cortisol in your system, you’re left in a constant “hyper-active” state, even late at night when it’s time for bed. You move “full speed ahead” all the time, and when you find some quiet time it’s hard to relax.

2

“TIRED AND WIRED”

You can’t slow down, even when you want to. You feel “wired” all the time, even when you also feel exhausted

Your natural rhythms are backwards. Your adrenal glands are producing cortisol at the end of the day instead of in the morning, leaving you feeling alert and awake in the middle of the night, but dragging in the morning. It takes a long time to fall asleep, and even when you do you often wake up ready to go at 2 am.

3

“TIRED”

It’s a challenge to simply move on.

You are completely worn out, and have no energy at all. Just getting through basic routines can feel impossible. You have to sit and rest after climbing one flight of stairs, or even brushing your teeth feels like too much effort. This may be accompanied by intense food cravings and weight gain you can’t explain. That’s all part of your body trying to survive. Minor stressors suddenly become major emergencies in your mind, but you feel at a loss to do anything about them.



What can I do to create adrenal balance?

Our reactions to stress can seem so automatic that you may find yourself wondering how you can change it. The good news is there are many natural steps you can take every single day to help keep your stress hormones balanced. These are the best places to begin changing your lifestyle to take control of your health.

1 Understand that what you eat matters

The average American diet is far from ideal - or even good - nutrition. So much of the food that is quick and easy to grab at the grocery store is filled with refined carbohydrates, including sugar, potatoes, flour and white rice. Convenience often doesn't promote health.

These prepackaged and highly processed foods cause spikes in insulin, impacting your blood sugar levels. Have you ever felt a sugar high after eating a mid-day candy bar? If so, you've also experienced the "crash" that comes when your blood sugar drops again. And when blood sugar levels are constantly rising and falling, the impact on your adrenal hormones is significant.

You can take charge of this area by choosing natural, whole foods (organic whenever possible). Spend some time on the weekends preparing meals for the week and you'll be more easily able to avoid the temptation of take out after a long day at work. A few quick and easy suggestions include: prepare salads in a



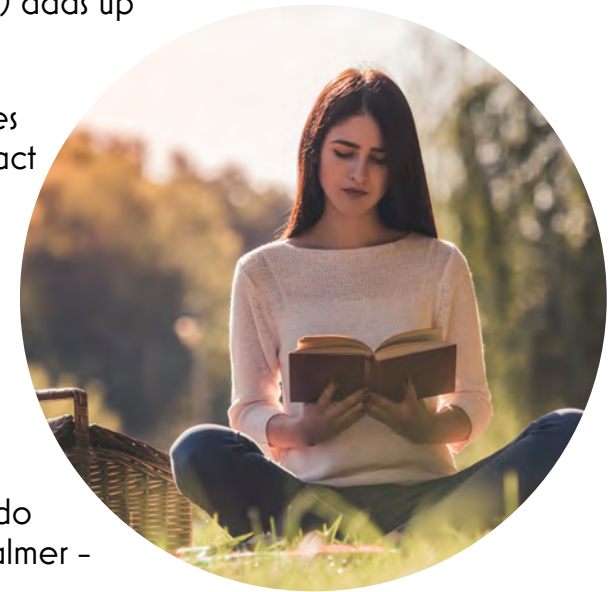
jar for lunches; cut vegetables for quick and easy stir fry; and make a big batch of soup to eat throughout the week.

Regulate your stress response.

2 I've already talked a little about how stress is everywhere. In the modern world, stress often begins when you rise (especially if the first thing you do is check your email or news headlines on a device) and continues until you finally (if you can) fall asleep. Excess time spent on computers and cell phones, shuttling children from one activity to another, caring for aging parents, keeping a house clean and meals on the table, and the pressures from a job (or two or three) adds up to far more stress than your body was designed to handle.

You can't avoid all stress, and some is even necessary, but the hormones your adrenals produce in response to constant stress have a huge impact on your body systems and functions. That's why it's critical to find small ways to reduce stress and manage your response to minor stressors. Self-care is essential, as is taking time to stop and breathe.

Set time limits for electronics - and follow them. Don't check email until you've had your breakfast, and put phones away (outside the bedroom) at least an hour before bedtime. Stop saying yes to every request; take the time to feel in your body what your true answer is. When you're waiting in line or at a traffic light, use the opportunity to do some deep breathing. These small steps can all add up to a much calmer - and healthier - life.



3 Be sure you are getting the nutrients you need.

Did you know that some of the most frustrating symptoms - weight gain, irritability, fatigue and so much more - can be a result of nutrient deficiencies? Many women are surprised to hear this news.

One of the best ways to support a healthy metabolism and adrenal balance is to take a complete, high-quality multivitamin/mineral complex every day. It can also be very useful to explore the nutrients different foods can provide, as well



as what your symptoms might be telling you about the nutrients your body needs more of. A good understanding of these topics can spur you into action so you feel better faster.

Marcelle's MultiEssentials Blend

The proprietary blend in my MultiEssentials vitamin/mineral complex is specially formulated to help give your body the support it needs, providing the essential nutritional balance that will allow you to heal from adrenal imbalance.

Some of the key nutrients you will receive from the MultiEssentials are:

- ∞ B Vitamins, along with vitamins C and E, which play a critical role in stress hormone production and activity
- ∞ Magnesium, which gives your adrenals the energy they need to work well.
- ∞ Calcium, zinc, iodine, manganese, and selenium, all of which can help relieve stress caused by adrenal fatigue and imbalance, helping your adrenals return to normal output of cortisol.

I also offer a range of targeted supplements that can help you address your specific needs. You can learn more by visiting my online store, or calling my office for guidance.



TRACKING PROGRESS

One of the most successful strategies my clients rely on is tracking the progress that we make together to notice what makes them feel great. Regular tracking of your symptoms, as well as the changes you are making to your diet and lifestyle, can give you a crystal clear picture of what works (and, sometimes, what doesn't).

I recommend that you take the **Adrenal Health Assessment** on my website at least twice each month. Progress can be slow, and difficult to recognize, if you aren't checking in regularly. And if you aren't seeing any progress at all, that's good information too! That may mean it's time to come in for a consultation so we can set up a more personalized approach for your needs.



Strategies to remember to take supplements:

- 🌀 Use sticky notes wherever you are most likely to notice them: the bathroom mirror, refrigerator door, on top of your mobile phone, or on the steering wheel of your car are all good options.
- 🌀 Use the reminder features on your phone or computer calendar.
- 🌀 Enlist help from family or friends in the first few weeks, until you have an established pattern.
- 🌀 Keep one day's supply of supplements in a pill box in your pocketbook. That way, you'll always have what you need on hand if you forget until after you leave.
- 🌀 Shoot for the same time each day to build a habit. Pairing it with another routine, like brushing your teeth, might also help.

Dietary Guidelines for Adrenal Health

I want to make regaining adrenal balance as easy as possible for you. Good adrenal (and overall) health depends on your body getting the right nutrition - and avoiding things that can throw off hormonal balance. Food truly is one of the best medicines there is -- and even organic food can be far less expensive than the medications and other treatments you require when you aren't giving your body the nutritional support it needs.

When you focus your attention on your eating habits, you can accelerate your success rate and feel better faster. And as an added bonus, you'll be building strength to aid in long term healing.

Adrenal Friendly Eating Habits:

My goal is to teach you how to plan and prepare meals that support overall health, restore balance to your life, and make mealtime a restorative, pleasant experience - not the rushed "chore" we often make it.

What you eat matters a great deal - but so, too, does when and even where you eat. If you are grabbing meals at the drive through and wolfing them down in the car, you aren't doing your body any favors. The following recommendations can help you develop regular healthy eating habits that support adrenal balance:

- ☞ Set regular eating times, and make sure you include three balanced meals and two snacks each day. Breakfast should be consumed within an hour of waking up unless you are doing intermittent fasting.



- ⌘ Keep heavy meals early in the day. Your lightest meal should be in the early evening.
- ⌘ Cut out - or reduce significantly - alcohol, caffeine, gluten, sugar, artificial sweeteners, processed food, and spicy foods.
- ⌘ Be careful with sweeteners. Cutting out sugar is important, but you don't want to replace it with something just as bad! The best sugar substitutes are stevia, xylitol, and erythritol. Agave syrup, though it has a low glycemic index, isn't recommended because of the high amount of fructose it contains. Fructose can be responsible for many issues, including increased inflammation.
- ⌘ Gluten is found in grains including wheat, barley and rye. Cross contamination in manufacturing may put oats on the list of grains to avoid as well. Gluten is also frequently added to foods as an additive – soy sauce, ketchup, wheat germ and even cosmetics can contain gluten. Read labels carefully!
- ⌘ Caffeine increases the burden on already hard-working adrenals. Try to cut back by drinking "half-caff" beverages or choosing herbal tea instead of coffee or soda.
- ⌘ Eat protein at every meal and snack.
- ⌘ Slow down and eat in a comfortable, relaxed setting. Give yourself enough time to eat slowly and truly enjoy the experience.



- ☞ Keep yourself well-hydrated. You should drink 6-10 glasses of water or herbal tea every single day.
- ☞ Be aware of portion sizes unless you are eating non-starchy vegetables. With those, you can eat all you want!
- ☞ Choose organic foods whenever possible. If affordability or availability are an issue, look at the Environmental Working Group's list of the "dirty dozen" - fruits and veggies that contain the most pesticides. Then, try to make sure you are at least eating the organic version of these. It's also a good idea to eat organic beef and chicken due to the antibiotics, growth hormones and feed given to conventionally raised cows and chickens.
- ☞ I tell women to follow the 90-10 rule. If you are following a healthy adrenal dietary plan 90% of the time, it's okay to treat yourself 10% of the time. You must be gentle with yourself, especially if you are changing lifelong habits. As you progress, you just might find that fruit is enough of a sweet treat. Until then, make sure you savor those treats you allow yourself!

Give your body the protein, fiber, fats and complex carbohydrates it needs.

Most fad diets rely on eliminating whole groups of foods entirely, but this is generally a BAD idea (unless they're only suggesting you get rid of processed foods and sugary treats)! Your body needs protein, complex carbohydrates, fats and fiber to stay healthy.

As with most things, a balanced approach is best. Making sure you include some foods from each category in each meal. This not only provides your body with the key nutrients it needs, it also gives you enough fuel for energy and keeps your blood sugar levels stable.

Here are a few important tips for each category:



Protein

- Organic, grass-fed meats or wild caught fish and seafood are the best options whenever possible.
- Good choices include nuts, beans, seeds, and other plant proteins. It's important to be sure you are chewing these well!
- Know how much protein you need so you can include the proper amount at each meal. Women usually need between 60 and 70 grams of protein per day.
- Eggs are a versatile, easy to prepare source of protein.

Carbohydrates

- When restoring adrenal balance is your goal, limit carbohydrates to no more than 66 grams per day - 16 at each meal and 7 at each snack.
- Don't eat carbohydrates on their own. Combine with healthy fats and protein to avoid quick shifts in blood sugar levels.
- Processed carbohydrates aren't what you need, especially "white foods" (white sugar or flour, refined grains). Do your best to eliminate - or drastically reduce - sugar, sweets, and "junk food" from your diet. Alcohol, which is full of sugar, is also best avoided.
- Choose complex carbohydrates - starchy vegetables, fresh fruit, and legumes are all great options.



Fats

- Include healthy fats with each meal. Fat promotes satiety (feeling full) so if you can, eat the fattiest foods at the beginning of your meal
- Avoid trans fats (partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated oils).
- Omega-3 fatty acids are the healthiest form of fat, so try to choose foods high in these.
- Preserve freshness in your cooking oils by keeping them in the refrigerator.
- Deep-fried foods are not the fats you want. Avoid them whenever possible. If you like the crispy texture of fried foods, try an air fryer! Cook fatty meats and fish at low temperatures to preserve their fats.

I know that I told you not to cut out entire groups of foods, but there is one exception. In the beginning, when you first start healing, I recommend avoiding any grains that contain gluten, including any form of wheat and rye. That doesn't mean, however, that you can't have any grains at all. My preferred choices are wild rice, quinoa, "pure" buckwheat and amaranth.

Later, you can reintroduce gluten, but if your symptoms return you may want to cut it out indefinitely.



Four key areas of change

In this section of this e-book, I'll help you learn how to make small, realistic lifestyle changes in four key areas to help restore adrenal balance by reducing stress on the hardworking glands. These may not be things you often hear about when talking to your medical professionals, but they are crucial to helping your body heal - and stay healthy! These four areas are:



You might not realize how much these areas impact your symptoms, but trust me, if you try some of the suggestions that follow, you might be happy to see how much relief being attentive to healthy daily habits can bring.



Exercise and Physical Wellness

Often, women are beating themselves up because they simply cannot muster up any energy at all for exercising. They tell me they used to exercise a lot, and be so much more physically active, but now even walking up a flight of stairs feels like too much to manage some days. I'm not surprised. These women have pushed themselves to the point of exhaustion, and their bodies are telling them enough is enough!

Exercise that is too frequent, too intense, or simply the wrong type for what your body needs right now will make your situation worse, not better. Often, pushing yourself too hard can exacerbate adrenal imbalance. That's why, for some women, I recommend they exercise less. This always surprises women, but it makes perfect sense to me. When someone is ready to drop, asking them to take a high energy aerobics class is asking for the impossible.

You must listen to your body. It's actually very good at telling you what it needs - and what it can't handle! It's critical to figure out the type of exercise that is right for your situation, and to pay attention to how physical activity makes you feel. If you are more exhausted instead of energized after a workout, you might have to take a step back on intensity until you feel better.

If you haven't been exercising regularly, it's best to start small. Commit to 15 or 20 minutes



of gentle activity three to five times per week. Don't start with Zumba, kickboxing, or running! Instead, find an activity that requires you to move - but also leaves you feeling relaxed. Whatever you choose, try to keep your heart rate at 90 beats per minute or below when you are participating in the activity.

If you already have a regular exercise routine, you don't need to stop altogether. I do recommend that you cut back a little, especially if you are exercising every day. Rest days are important! I find that no more than six hours of exercise per week, focusing on stretching and strength training, works well for many women who are battling adrenal dysfunction. In the beginning, I suggest limiting cardiovascular exercise to low-impact activities like walking. Yoga, t'ai chi, pilates, and qigong are great ways to keep yourself active while rebalancing your adrenals.

As you heal, you may feel ready for a more intense workout. When this happens, I don't recommend jumping right back into high-intensity workouts. Instead, try "bursting" during your workout. As you participate in cardiovascular routines, boost your speed to twice your normal pace for 30-60 seconds, then return to your regular pace. Alternate original pace and bursts throughout the workout. These bursts of speed build stamina and help you get the most out of your exercise - especially when you have limited time!

It's so important to allow yourself room to take things a little easier. Choosing a shorter walk or a half hour workout instead of an hour might help you get out and do something rather than staying on the couch.

When you feel exhausted and worn down, it can be hard to be motivated to do anything at all. Giving yourself permission to do a little less, and avoiding the "all or nothing" mentality, can help you look forward to exercising without all the pressure. You can always decide to do more once you're feeling better. Being kind to yourself will get you there much faster than beating yourself up!





If you:

- Can't find any time for exercise
- Find exercise boring
- Feel too tired to exercise
- Never do any exercise at all

It's time to try these quick tips to begin (or continue) moving for balanced adrenals.

First and foremost -- FIND SOMETHING YOU LOVE!

If you are enjoying every minute of the activity, it won't feel like you are exercising - it will just feel like you're having fun! Finding something that inspires you feels great - and that makes you keep doing it! To find that spark, try a completely new activity: modern dance, hiking, planting flowers, swimming -- anything that gets you moving counts.

Start slowly. Commit to being active for 15 to 20 minutes twice a week. Increase the time slowly, and only when you are feeling better.

Find ways to add more physical activity into the things you are already doing. Suggest a walk instead of coffee with a friend. Play with your children or grandchildren instead of watching from the bench. Get up and dance in your living room with friends or your partner.



Exercise can seem really intimidating if you haven't been doing anything, but often the hardest part is just getting started. Promise yourself this: no matter how tired you are, you will be active for at least 10 minutes every single day. That might just mean walking up and down the stairs a few times - and that helps!

Once you get started on something, you'll often find yourself getting so involved that you do more than you intended. And if you notice how great that feels, getting started the next time might be easier.

Stress Reduction and Emotional Wellness

I've always known that your physical health is tied to your emotional experience. This is particularly true when you're talking about adrenal health.

I also know that you can't get rid of all the negative stress in your life. And even when you can eliminate stress, it sometimes takes time. That's why I want to offer support so that you can change the way you react to those stressors that are beyond your control. Knowing that you are in charge of your own reactions can help reduce the impact that stress has on your body.

Negotiating emotional stress is a journey, and it will take time and commitment to changing your way of responding. But there are several things you can do immediately to get yourself started.



My favorite ways to begin changing your internal script:

Keep a journal

Writing things down is a great way to help you discover and explore how you're really feeling about a situation. Journaling can also help you notice patterns in your behavior and reactions, as well as recognizing emotional triggers. This awareness is the first step towards changing those patterns!

Hit the pause button

When you feel yourself beginning to fret about something stop, take a deep breath, and let it out slowly. This allows you time to choose how to react, rather than reacting out of old habits or reflex.

Slow down

Meditation and mindful practices are a great way to rejuvenate both physical and mental health. And it doesn't have to take a long time. If you haven't tried meditating before, set aside just five minutes to be totally quiet and still. Focus on your breathing. Try counting as you breathe: inhale for 7, hold for 7, exhale for 7.

Build self care routines

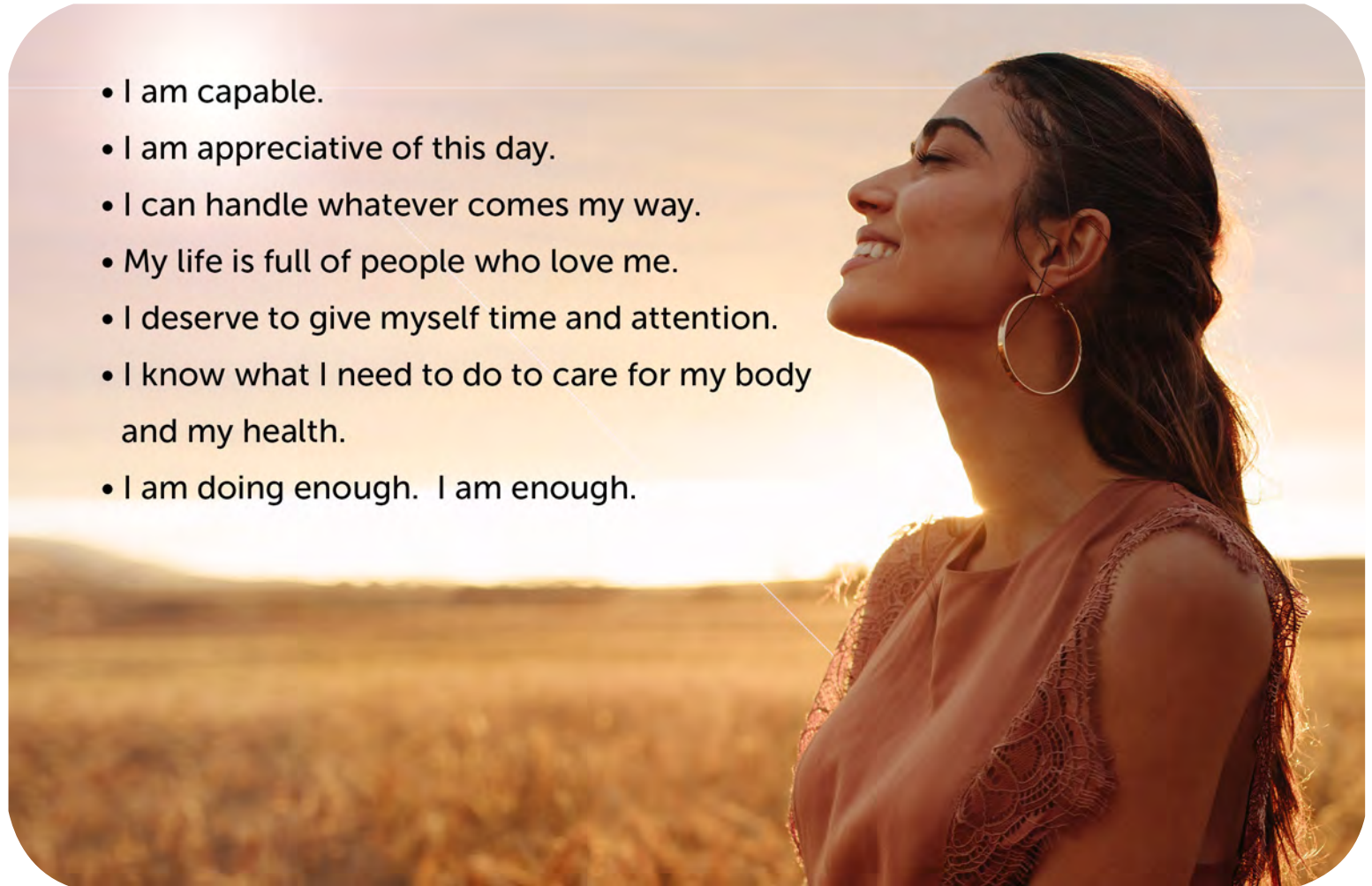
- and don't feel guilty about it! You cannot care for others constantly without taking good care of yourself as well. Be sure to build time for what you want to do into your schedule. No one can sustain only doing what they have to do for long. You deserve time to relax and do the things you like to do. Take a barefoot walk on the beach, read a book, photograph nature, play with a child (or a pet), go to a movie, sit and daydream; the list of possibilities is endless. The most important thing is to do something that brings you joy!



How daily affirmations can help

Affirmations flip the focus from negative to positive. Repeating affirmations daily allows you to zero in on what you want, instead of dwelling on what you don't have in your life. When you use the present tense to state your desires, as if they are already true, you can attract what you are looking for. Here are some examples of affirmations you can use to create the life you want:

- I am capable.
- I am appreciative of this day.
- I can handle whatever comes my way.
- My life is full of people who love me.
- I deserve to give myself time and attention.
- I know what I need to do to care for my body and my health.
- I am doing enough. I am enough.



To really be effective, affirmations need to be meaningful and relevant to your situation. Take a few minutes right now to come up with some positive affirmations. Start by thinking of three things you like about yourself, and then saying them out loud. Now, think of two things you want to attract to your life. Say them aloud, as if they are already real.

I have many articles on how your emotions are connected to health on my website, www.marcellepick.com. Visit the site today to learn more tips for addressing emotional stress.

The connection between past stress and present health

Adrenal imbalance is a result of prolonged high levels of stress. But what is the source of this stress? Most women, when asked, will name factors that are currently present - work projects and deadlines, family issues, financial trouble, or problems in their current personal relationships.

What they often don't realize is that there is a great deal of evidence that shows that periods of stress from long ago are also impacting our present stress levels, even if we aren't thinking about them on a conscious level. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study is a large scale, long term study that demonstrated that the more "adverse experiences" (from a list of ten) a person experienced as a child, the higher the risk of developing serious health problems, including heart disease, substance abuse issues, cancer, diabetes, depression and anxiety. Even more startling is the fact that of the 17,000 study participants, almost two-thirds reported experiencing at least one ACE and more than one-fifth reported experiencing three or more.

What that tells me is that most of us are walking around with some internalized stress. And these old events can linger in our bodies, triggering our stress response without us even knowing it.



While you can't change the past, you can find ways to address it so you don't stay stuck in old patterns. For instance, if you always find yourself overreacting to a specific interaction with your spouse, reflect upon what happened in your childhood. Were your efforts always met with criticism, so you felt like you could never please your parents? Do you now blow up when your partner offers any suggestions at all?

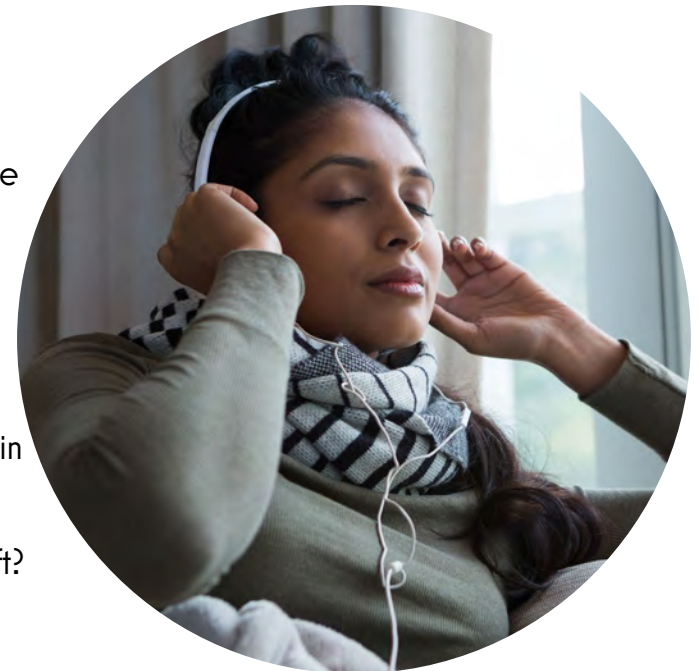
Examine family conflicts and secrets. Are there some (maybe even many) that have never been resolved? Why do you think that is? Take a look at your emotions as well. Are there some that have been stuffed down repeatedly - maybe anger, pain or grief? Now might be the time to figure out how to finally deal with those old hurts.

It can be scary to dredge up old emotional patterns, but when you take the time to notice them coming up for you, and allow yourself the space to examine where they came from, you might discover they aren't serving you well any longer. You may also gain insight that allows you to let these old issues go - which can reduce your stress and keep cortisol levels lower.

Find your safe (and happy) place

Have you ever noticed how good pets are at finding a place where they feel safe to curl up and sleep? Have you ever envied them this ability? Where would your safe space be if you could choose anywhere you wanted to sit and rest? Even if you can't physically go there now, try this breathing exercise to find it in your mind.

- 🌀 Find a comfortable position, either seated or lying down, and close your eyes. Mentally put yourself in a safe and cozy space in your home.
- 🌀 Think about the qualities you love about this spot. Is it warm? Soft? What about this space comforts you?



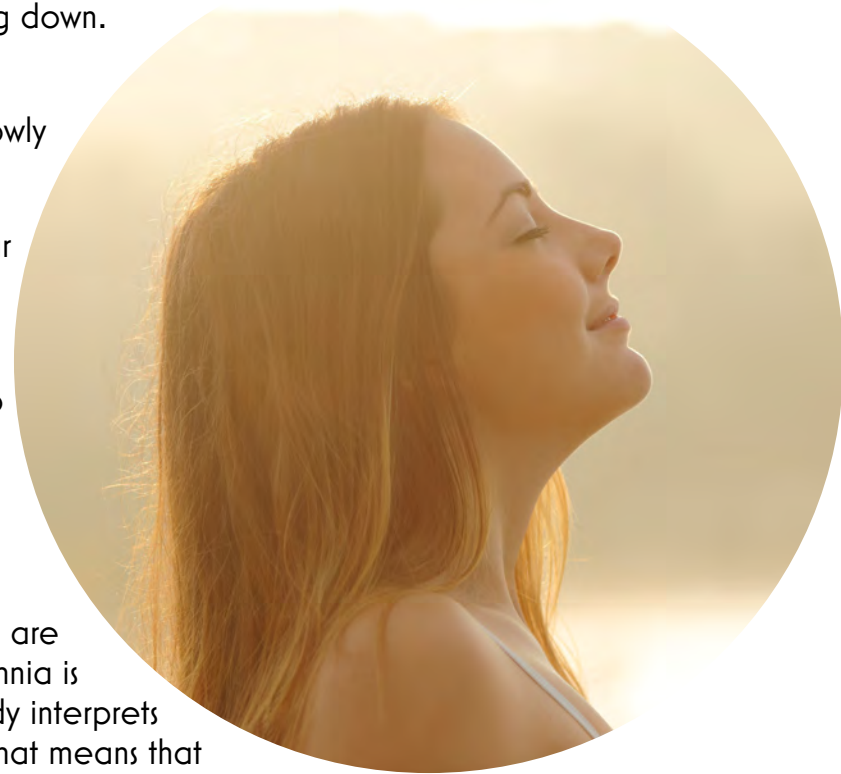
- ☞ Hold those thoughts in your body and slow your breathing down.
- ☞ Inhale through your nose, letting your lungs fill with rich, oxygenated air. Hold for a few seconds, then exhale slowly through your nose.
- ☞ Begin counting to five as you breathe, first in through your nose, then out through your nose.
- ☞ You can do this with soft music playing, or in silence. Maintain this breathing for five minutes to help you let go of stress and connect to the peace inside you.

Quality Sleep

The more stress you have during the day, the more likely you are to be up at night long after you'd like to be sleeping. Insomnia is one of the most common effects of stress, because your body interprets stress of any kind as something that could threaten survival. That means that even activities you enjoy can contribute to an inappropriate stress response.

Your body doesn't distinguish between stimulating and exciting activities - like a roller coaster ride or skydiving - and legitimately dangerous situations (like being chased by a wild animal). Even emotional stress is processed the same way. And to make matters worse, you may not be aware of the physical impact stress is having on your body when it's caused by everyday situations. What happens is that your body reacts the same way to all of these situations, and you are kept alert and aware for long periods of time - even when you don't need to be. This disrupts your natural circadian rhythm, which determines when you sleep and when you are awake.

Seven to eight hours of sleep each night is the minimum amount your body needs for its natural detoxification process, reducing stress, and managing increased symptoms of adrenal imbalance. Sleep is always important, but when your adrenals are compromised, it's even more so.



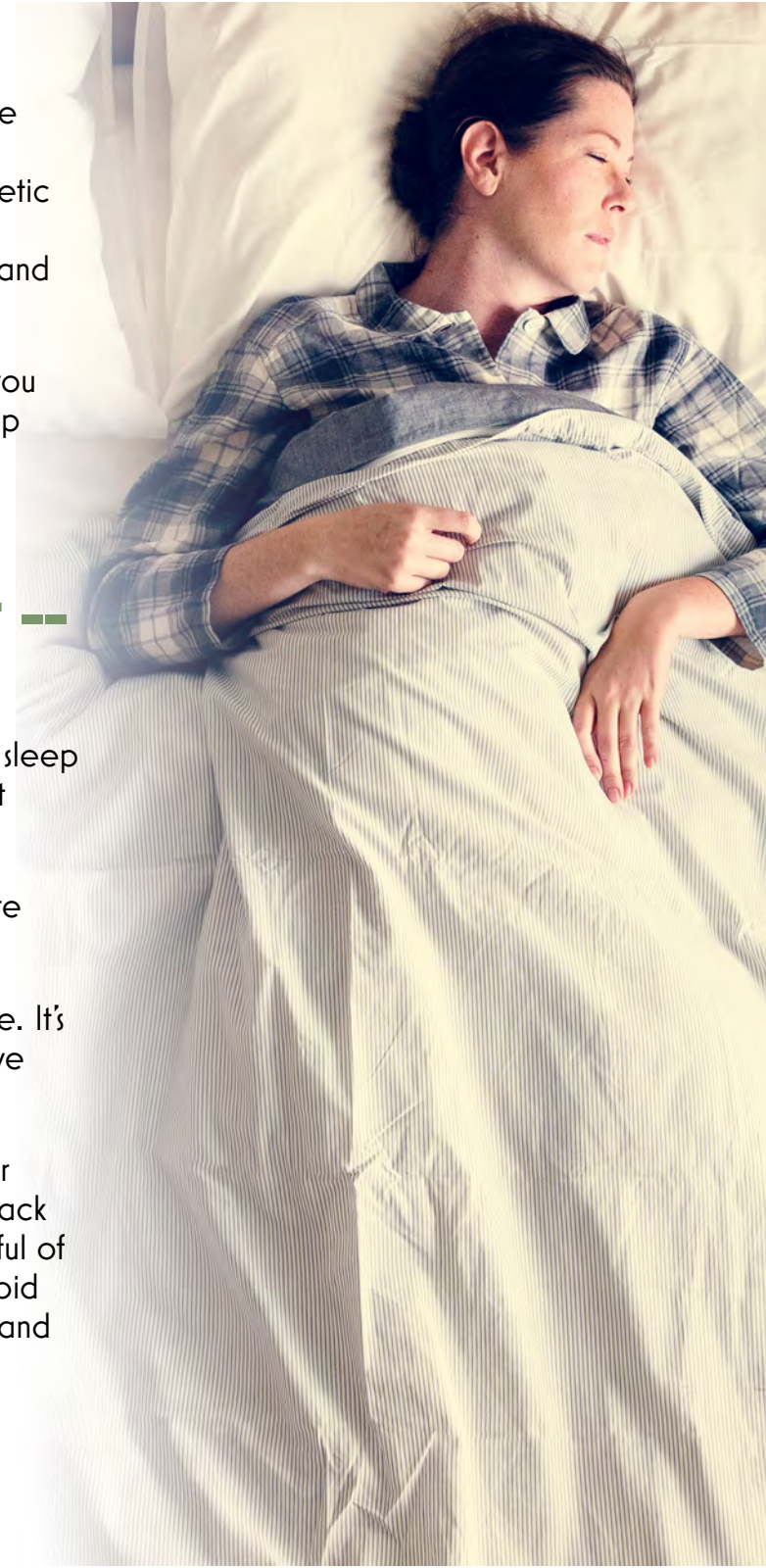
Creating a peaceful, regular, relaxing routine that you practice every night before bed can help make sure you get the sleep you need. Having this routine lets your body and parasympathetic nervous system know that it's time to unwind and get ready to sleep. But new patterns take time to settle into, so be patient and persistent in following the routine you set for yourself.

When you are aware of the factors that impact quality sleep, you can make some easy lifestyle and pre-bedtime changes to help ensure you get the sleep you need.

Strategies to get to sleep easier -- and stay asleep!

There are so many ways to be sure you can get the restorative sleep you need each night. Try the following techniques to find what makes a difference for you.

- ⌘ Be aware not only of what you are eating, but when you are eating.
- ⌘ Don't eat your largest meal of the day too close to bedtime. It's best to make your mid-day meal the heaviest meal you have each day.
- ⌘ If you're waking up at night due to hunger, your blood sugar may be dropping too low. In this case, you should eat a snack with protein about an hour before you go to bed. A handful of nuts or an apple with almond butter are great choices. Avoid white-flour, starchy and sugary foods this close to bedtime (and anytime!)



Create a relaxing sleep environment

The way you set up your bedroom, and what you use the space for, can make a big difference in your sleep patterns.

Unplug

- ⌘ All the excess input (and the blue light) from electronics can keep your mind racing and your brain on high alert. Turn off cell phones, tablets, computers and the television an hour before you need to go to sleep.
- ⌘ If television is part of your evening routine, choose comedies. Laughter is a great tool for relaxation!

Examine your evening routines

- ⌘ Everyone has different needs when it comes to getting their bodies ready for sleep. Some can make the shift in 10-15 minutes. Others need at least an hour. Take time to recognize how long you need to wind down so you can build that time into your routine.
- ⌘ Exercise can keep you awake and alert for several hours, so it's best to do your workout early in the day, instead of in the evening. Gentle stretching or yoga might be a nice addition to your evening routine, however.
- ⌘ Don't use your bed for anything but sleeping or sex.

Tips for Sleep Patterns

- ⌘ If ambient noise is keeping (or waking) you up, try earplugs, a "white noise" machine, or a fan to block it out.
- ⌘ Make sure your room is dark enough. Try blackout curtains or shades to keep outside light out.
- ⌘ Make your room a pleasant place to be. Paint the room in soothing colors that you love, and invest in bedding that is comfortable. Be sure your bedding isn't too light or too heavy for your needs. Temperature makes a big difference in your ability to stay asleep.
- ⌘ Leave work outside the bedroom. If your room must double as an office, use a screen to separate the work area from the bed.
- ⌘ Leave electronics outside the bedroom.



Know the impact your emotions can have on sleep

- ✎ Keep a dream journal to help you identify which thoughts and emotions may be behind upsetting dreams. Reflecting on your dreams and how they make you feel can also be a great way to discover what is important to you- and what you might need to change in your life.
- ✎ A notebook and pen beside the bed can help you get worries or "to do" lists out of your head so you can sleep. If you find yourself lying in bed awake, running through what you need to accomplish the next day, turn the light on and write it all down. If there's a small task nagging at you that can be easily accomplished, get up and complete it so you can release it from your thoughts.

A sleep log can uncover the root of your insomnia

A little awareness goes a long way! Writing things down allows you to look at them all in the same place to track what might be behind your inability to sleep. Identifying patterns and lifestyle choices that impact your sleep is the first step towards change.



So many things can impact your sleep, so you'll want to note the following in your Sleep Log

- ✎ Dietary information: what you are eating and when.
- ✎ Medications, including any vitamins, minerals or targeted supplements you are taking; include dosage and time you take them in your notes.
- ✎ Nicotine, caffeine and alcohol - how much and when.
- ✎ Exercise - include what you are doing and the time of day.
- ✎ Menstrual cycle patterns.
- ✎ Stress and anxiety levels
- ✎ What your sleep environment is like -- include sounds, light, bedding and temperature of the room.
- ✎ Regular bedtime routines and schedule.



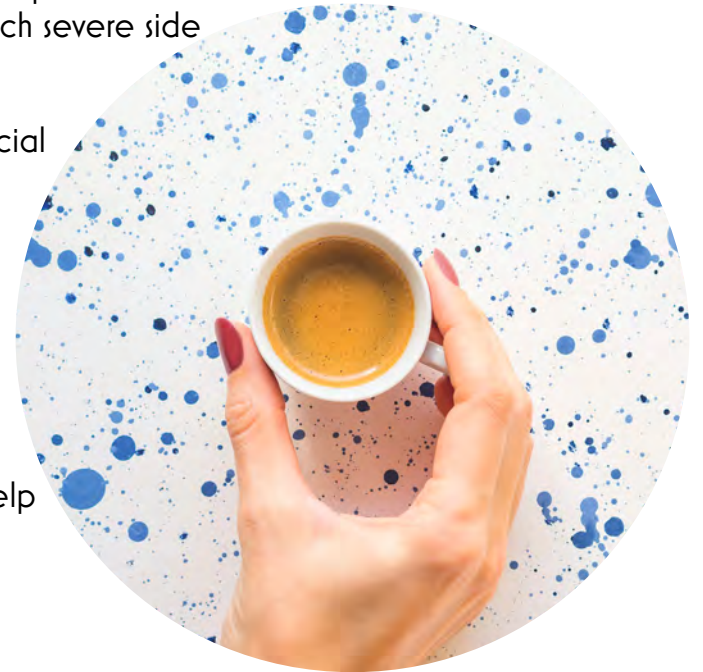
Detoxification

Our modern world is filled with toxins that our bodies absorb and often hang on to, despite their natural detoxification processes. Chemicals are everywhere, and the toxic buildup can overwhelm your adrenals, making detoxification more difficult. While your body has an amazing built-in system, sometimes it needs a little support. Supplements, probiotics, fiber, purified water, stress reduction and low-impact exercise can lend the support your adrenals need to heal.

- ☞ **Breathe deeply and deliberately.** We have to breathe to stay alive, but often our breathing becomes shallow and ineffective, especially in times of stress. Develop a pattern of deliberate breathing throughout your day. Take 3-5 deep breaths (count 7-7-7 to be sure you are breathing slowly and deeply enough) in the morning when you first get up, before each meal, and right before you go to bed.
- ☞ **Throw out processed foods - and don't buy more!** Processed foods may be convenient, but they are loaded with chemicals that don't support good health. Read labels, and get rid of anything that contains added sugar (in any form), refined flour, hydrogenated oils and other trans fats, artificial sweeteners or flavorings, dyes, and preservatives. Your body can't process all these fillers well, and they don't provide anything in the way of nutrition.
- ☞ **Choose organic, fresh, local whole foods as often as you can.** Food grown or produced locally doesn't require as many preservatives to keep it fresh. Organic is especially important in the "dirty dozen" fruits and vegetables that contain the most pesticides. Be sure you are washing fruits and vegetables - especially if they aren't organic.
- ☞ **Give massage or lymph drainage a try.** A trained practitioner can work to promote healthy lymph flow to flush out toxins. Many forms of yoga also help with lymph flow.



- ☞ **Stop smoking.** This isn't easy, I know, but it's so important to your health. When you cut back on the number of cigarettes - or cut them out completely - your adrenal glands will thank you! You don't have to quit all at once; it's a process. Maybe you've tried before without success. Don't give up! Most people who successfully give up smoking try more than once before they reach their goal. Seek out support as needed.
- ☞ **Reduce caffeine and alcohol intake.** Again, going "cold turkey" isn't the best bet. If you have had caffeine or alcohol daily, reduce it by one portion each day. By the time you eliminate it completely, you won't have such severe side effects - and you might not even miss it!
- ☞ **Go "green" with cleaning products.** So many of the commercial cleaning products are loaded with chemicals that can wreak havoc on your system. Did you know that white vinegar is as effective for disinfecting as chemical cleaners? It's true! And vinegar is non-toxic and a lot less expensive.
- ☞ **Notice food sensitivities.** Many common ingredients (gluten, dairy, nuts, eggs, etc.) induce symptoms in women who aren't even aware they have these sensitivities. Keeping a food journal, and noting any symptoms that arise after eating, can help you identify hidden sensitivities.



Reset with an Elimination Diet

One of the best ways to really notice what makes you feel poorly is to try an elimination diet that cuts out all common allergens for a period of time, and then slowly adds them back one by one. Even if you don't have sensitivities, eating "clean" once or twice each year can restore health and get you back on the right track. Spring and Fall are good times to try this. If you plan it to coincide with Daylight Savings Time you'll have a built in starting point.



Healthy Adrenals e-book

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