Exploring Adrenal Fatigue

Adrenal compromise will be the most common energetic imbalance that you work with in your practice. It is either the root cause or the symptom of nearly everything that shows up. And yes, that may be a generalisation, but one that will hold true for the majority of clients as we live in a world in which stress is a common, everyday factor that all of us are managing (with greater or lesser success).

Adrenal glands that are out of balance may present as:

- all hormonal imbalance, including fertility, thyroid imbalance, menopause issues, mood swings, PMT, brain fog.
- imbalance in the 5 rhythms
- Exhaustion
- all auto-immune illnesses
- pain in the body
- weight issues
- CFS/ME….really, the list can go on and on.

Any situation that we are working with as a challenge will have the adrenal glands involved either as the root or the symptom. Our work as energy detectives will be assess whether it is root or symptom as we progress through the work with the client, but either way, we will need to work to bring back adrenal health.

Over the past 2 years I have both taught on the adrenal glands and written blogs on them so I am including that information here, but will also be expanding on this information with regard to the clinical methodology and application.

If you haven’t previously read it, a good starting point is the blog below:

Blog: *Thriving or Surviving? The power of the Adrenal Glands.*

In the question of how we move our whole-body system from one of coping/surviving/managing life/managing stress into one of being able to thrive, the adrenal glands really are central to the issue.

Sitting on top of the kidneys and responsible for the production of adrenaline, the adrenal glands are governed by Triple Warmer, a meridian and a key player in the protective systems that keep us alive when we are in life-threatening situations. As we explored in http://imaginalhealth.com/blog/?p=51, when our Triple Warmer energy perceives we are in a life-threatening situation a series of physiological and energetic processes are enacted that result in us moving our whole-body system into an emergency response reaction. At this point, adrenaline begins to be pumped into our body, triggering cholesterol and estrogen (other stress hormones) to also activate.

One really important fact here is that generally, your body has to choose between making stress hormones and making reproductive/sex hormones. Anytime Triple Warmer rolls out the protective
systems then it is stress hormones that begin to rule your body. This is one of the reasons that women can get so hormonally out of balance when they are experiencing long-term stress....the stress knocks out the equilibrium of the reproductive/sex hormones and can send the whole hormonal system into disarray; irritability, sleeplessness, fatigue, polycystic ovaries, fibroids, thyroid imbalance...the list can go on and on. It is a blessing that women’s hormones cycle so regularly as women tend to see the results of stress in their system quite quickly (over a timeframe of only a few months). As long as you are empowered to make the necessary changes (and that is what energy medicine gives you), then you can move your hormonal system back into balance, vitality and health.

The effect of Triple Warmer setting off the protective alarm is the same in men’s systems, with testosterone getting out of balance and leading to a build up of tension, intensity, overwhelm and sometimes aggression. But one of the challenges with men’s hormones is that the symptoms of imbalance can take longer to show up which means that by the time they do they can be deeply entrenched patterns, such as prostate cancer. Such deep patterns take more work and time to change back into ones of health.

So how do you know if your triple warmer is engaged and your adrenal glands are overworked? Stress knocks us so off balance, it is addictive and accumulative. This means that even when you know you are stressed, tired and should be looking after yourself, you instead find that you are doing even more work or that suddenly it is imperative that you completely clean the house. You lose your centre and you lose your balance when the adrenal glands are producing adrenaline and cortisol in excess. When I see someone whose adrenal glands are working too hard then it looks like their whole system is buzzing. Think of how you feel when you feel affected by caffeine...that buzzing feeling deep inside that seems to work throughout all of your cells. Now think of the visuals of that. It is like the aura, the organs, the meridians, the skin, the brain...all are buzzing with a slightly crazed electrical energy, released by the adrenal glands to help you to fight, flee or freeze in order to resolve your perceived life-threatening situation. But if your stressor is your work, your home, your relationship, your financial situation, or the stories told by the media, then your poor adrenal glands are never getting a break. They are working 24/7.

At first it looks like the whole system is buzzing, ready to burst out. Then, after a few weeks or months, it looks like the system is internally collapsing. The best image I can think of is for you to think of your adrenal glands as a black hole that are consuming vast amounts of your energy. At this point a level of fatigue is settling in and even after a ‘good night’s’ sleep’ you’ll wake up tired. Many people will be turning to sugar at this point as sugar can keep fuelling the adrenal glands in their desperate attempt to keep producing adrenaline. And it will be sugar that never satisfies (which in turn of course plays havoc with your metabolism and your over all energies as the sugar toxifies your system)

If the situation doesn’t alter significantly, then after several months most people will start heading towards adrenal burnout, which is a full system collapse. This can take months or years to come about and months or years to heal from. I work a lot with people who have ME/CFS and without exception they are experiencing adrenal burnout.
So, interested in balancing your adrenal glands? There are two videos that I have up on youtube that are specifically geared to working with triple warmer and the adrenal glands.

‘Balancing Triple Warmer and Spleen’ [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1s3wVF3sts](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1s3wVF3sts) will let you keep supporting your triple warmer system. This is a great one to do daily or several times in the day, especially if you know that you are managing stress.

The second video is the ‘Hormone Hook-Up’ [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4kstIY4cZY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4kstIY4cZY) which focuses specifically on helping release and balance your adrenal glands in order to bring overall vitality to the whole hormone system. If you are working with stress and compromised adrenal health then this is great to do every few days for several months until you feel that you are back on track with your true health and vitality. You can make such a huge difference to your life by helping balance your adrenal glands. (Please note, for those of you in the PAM program this Hormone Hook Up is not the Rooster Comb/Triple Axis Hold but a way of working with the endocrine system beginning and ending with the adrenal glands. If you haven’t had a look at it, then give it a go, it is getting some great clinical results).

The starting place for clinical application when someone is presenting with adrenal imbalance is with an understanding of the basic hormonal triad of the Adrenal glands, the Thyroid gland and the Pancreas.

**ADRENALS ~ THYROID~ PANCREAS**

This triad is about energy production, stress management and energy reserves.

- Adrenal glands are about stress/energy
- Thyroid is about metabolism
- Pancreas is about sugar-storage
The adrenal glands are the foundational aspect of this triad. If they are out of balance then the other two cannot be balanced. Adrenal glands are the real starting point! This is especially important when working with Thyroid issues (which are second only to adrenal issues in most people). You can only reach thyroid after adrenal and insulin (pancreas) imbalances have been corrected. With the adrenals being governed by TW and Pancreas being governed by Spleen we begin to understand the essential relationship between the TW and SP energies.

**Physiology of the Adrenal glands**

Located on top of both kidneys, the right adrenal gland is triangular shaped while the left suprarenal gland is shaped like half a moon or semi-lunar in shape. Each of the glands are around 4 to 6 cm in length.

**Function**

The adrenal glands release over 50 hormones that encompass a vast array of functions.

- Energy production by controlling cholesterol, protein and fat conversion to blood glucose
- Fluid and electrolyte balance in cells, interstitial fluid and blood stream
- Sex hormone production (especially after menopause)

The adrenal gland has two components; the cortex and the medulla.

The outer part (*adrenal cortex*) secretes Androgenic Steroid (Sex Hormones) such as Estrogen, testosterone, DHEA, progesterone. Glucocorticoids such as cortisol that regulate energy reserves. And Mineralcorticoids such as aldosterone fluid balance in the body (blood pressure), levels of salt and potassium in the body.

The inner part (*adrenal medulla*) of the adrenal glands secretes cathecholamines such as Epinephrine (adrenaline) and Norepinephrine (Noradrenaline). They are Stress Hormones that govern the heart rate,
heart pumping capacity, blood pressure, sweating and rate of breathing. These are part of the “fight-flight-freeze” (f-f-f) response in reaction to danger.

- **Fight:** Anger and Rage
- **Flight:** Fear and panic
- **Freeze:** Hysteria, numbness, feeling overwhelmed or trapped (how the majority of us respond)

Adrenaline and Cortisol are our stress hormones that respond in f-f-f.

Adrenaline works on a short term basis while cortisol has great momentum and works over a much longer period. They are both stress hormones and are essential to us in times of stress. This is a good time to remember the incredible wisdom of our body. It isn’t a glitch in the system that makes our adrenal glands imbalanced, it is glitch in our modern way of living!

Cortisol stimulates the release of glucose, fats and amino acids for energy production.

The production of cortisol in the adrenal cortex is controlled by the hormone adrenocorticotropin (ACTH), which is produced by the pituitary gland at the base of the brain. During the f-f-f response it is released in high levels.

Cortisol controls mood and well-being, immune cells, inflammation, blood pressure, maintenance of connective tissues (bones, muscles, skin). It is also needed for restoration of energy stores following stress. It activates cells to wake us up and get going in the morning.

Stage 1 of F-F-F

Adrenaline, noradrenaline, cortisol, oxytocin and vasopressin are released into the bloodstream. Hydrochloric acid is secreted into the stomach. Glucose is released from the liver. Heart rate increases by 2 or 3 times, blood pressure increases, we sweat, breath shallowly, senses heighten, pupils dilate so we can see more clearly. Blood is moved to the muscles (from the digestive tract and the forebrain), adrenaline rushes into the brain to excite all the neurons (brain cells) so we can think better. Systems not essential or survival shut down = the immune, digestive and sexual systems!

Psychological aspects: ability to maintain perspective diminishes, as does our logical and creative functioning. These are characteristics of the forebrain or neo-cortex and the blood from the forebrain has rushed to aid the fff responses of the reptilian brain.

Stage 2 of FFF

Adrenaline starts coming down as cortisol rises. Your body begins to relax and you can fall into a mood slump as all of the negative side effects of the chemicals racing through your body begin to be experienced. In our modern world this is often when we reach for the sugar or caffeine.
Chronic F-F-F

Stress is catabolic; it breaks down the body. The nervous system and endocrine system are knocked off balance. Your levels of cortisol get higher and higher in the body which suppresses the immune system, shrinks the thymus, damages neurons (brain cells) and impairs long term memory, creates abdominal fat.

When cortisol is out of balance then it takes up the available progesterone in the body. This leaves the sex hormones out of balance, often showing up with high estrogen and low progesterone. **This is a predictor for just about every disease possible.**

**Too much cortisol** can cause symptoms of weight gain around the waist, poor sleep, fatigue, elevated blood sugars, menstrual irregularities, increased thirst, higher blood pressure and even more frequent infections.

**Too little cortisol** symptoms include fatigue, sugar or salt cravings, low blood sugar, a history of low blood pressure, skin rashes, allergies, poor sleep, depression and anxiety.

**Adrenal Fatigue**

Chronic stress will overwork the adrenal gland to the point of exhaustion and eventually they become too fatigued to meet the needs of the body. This is adrenal fatigue.

Adrenal Fatigue is a clinical disorder as well as being a major contributing factor for many chronic illnesses. Dr. James Wilson, in his book *Adrenal Fatigue; the 21st Century Syndrome* suggests there are three stages of adrenal fatigue

1. Alarm stage
2. Stage of resistance
3. Stage of exhaustion

**Adrenal fatigue symptoms** (I keep this list in my clinic and will give it to clients so they can see if they identify with any/many of these symptoms.)

- Morning fatigue
- Afternoon low 2-4pm
- Usually feels best after 6pm
- Tired at 9-10pm but resists going to bed
- If not in bed by 11pm then second wind until 1ish
- Craves salt or salty foods
- Becomes hypoglycemic under stress
- Mild depression
- Lethargy
- Everything seems to take more effort
- Decreased ability to manage stress
- Muscular weakness
- Allergies
- Light-headedness
- Chronic fatigue
- Apathy
- Mild constipation or diarrhea
- Craves food high in fat
- Uses food high in fat or caffeine
- Lack of feeling, caring/sense of deadness
- Inefficient processing of calories
- Compulsive eating, especially sweets and simple carbohydrates
- Compulsive behaviours
- Diminished sex drive
- Impaired immune system
- Burning in kidney area
- Difficulty breathing
- Inflammation and swelling in 2nd and 3rd chakras
- Dry mouth and experiencing dry mouth even when drinking plenty of water

**Energetics of the Adrenal glands**

‘Energy fields are vital in broadcasting the signals that make this enormous community of decision makers (the hormones, cells, organs) work in harmony’ Donna Eden

**Triple Warmer and Spleen**

The adrenal glands are governed by Triple Warmer.

Triple Warmer works with the hypothalamus to govern

1. The immune system
2. The emergency response to threat (fff)
3. The ability to form physiological and behavioural habits for managing threat or stress.

Throughout our early evolutionary journey threats and thus stress came from lack of food/water resources, and the few predators ready to eat early human. This is very different now. What are our modern stresses and threats? Thousands of ‘false alarms’ for TW everyday.
‘The physiological and psychological cost of these false alarms is substantial, in visibly draining your life force’. (Donna Eden) Thus the relationship between TW and Spleen is essential in the management of adrenal health. Note that Triple Warmer and Spleen are also the two energetic arms of the Immune System; TW=sympathetic arm, Spleen= parasympathetic arm.

**Kidney**

The adrenal glands also have a very close relationship with Kidney. This is due in part to the fact that the adrenal glands sit on top of the kidneys but also because of the way in which Water (Kidney and Bladder) controls Fire (TW...adrenals) in the control cycle of the 5 rhythms. Our kidneys are reservoirs for our ‘life-force’ and as such the relationship between TW/SP/KI become of great importance with adrenal rejuvenation. Regularly doing a deep nourishing protocol on kidney can really bring feed adrenal health.
Electrics

Excess electricity in the body hits the adrenal glands. When we can’t ground the adrenal glands soak up the excess. This is not a good thing. Gradually they become fuller and fuller and tighter and tighter and the juiciness of the adrenal glands become more solid, hard, bursting, like concrete balls waiting to either explode or implode. Our hormonal glands should be juicy, ready to respond but not into a place of strained vigilance. Working with the Electrics to balance the Adrenal Glands, and grounding is vital to all of our healthy balance.

The adrenal glands can be so full of electricity that they are burning up oxygen faster than you can breathe it into the body so helping the adrenal glands to release that excess electrical energy is a wonderful way to bring more balance and energy into the body. One of my favorite ways to help the electrics with a focus on the adrenal glands is to connect the Heart electric point with the adrenal gland neurolymphatic points

- With one hand hold the heart electric point and with a finger and thumb of the other hand hold the adrenal gland NL point. This connects the electrical energy of the adrenal glands into the enormous electrical energy of the heart, bringing more balance to the adrenal glands. Hold this for 10-20 minutes, or until you feel your fingers cooling or a lessening in the throbbing beneath your fingers. Note: this is powerful so I would make sure the energies of the client were well balanced prior to doing this, via a Quickie Energy Balancer or similar. I would especially check for balance in the fire meridians of CS, TW, HT and SI.

Another way to help move the electricity through the adrenal glands is the ujjayi/dragon breath. It brings kidney energy deeply into the lower dantien which in turn bathes the adrenal glands with relaxing energy. I teach every client working with any adrenal imbalance how to do the dragon breath and encourage them to do it as often as possible, for as long as possible.

Neurolymphatic Points

One of the most valuable tools the client has for working with the adrenal glands are the neurolymphatic reflex points. They are so great at helping balance TW and Spleen as they bring in good all over movement. When we consider that for most of us when we are stressed we move into FREEZE, then working with the NL points begins to help the body continually adjust back into movement and balance. The lymph system is also vital for moving toxins from the body, and when it is congested then Spleen can get very compromised in its ability to continue metabolising and integrating. Teaching people how to massage the neurolymphatics in a way that they will do it (and maybe even enjoy doing it!), is always a priority for me. It is easy to say, ‘Do it as hard as you can bear it’, but it really doesn’t encourage people to do it. Spend good time with your client teaching them the importance of the NL points and finding the way to work most effectively with theirs.
Protocol for deeply nourishing your own adrenal glands

1. Massage adrenal NL points on the front and back of the body (the back points are directly in line with the front points).
2. Massage the cortisol points on the front (take the fingers out either side of the belly button by one inch and then drop down an inch below).
3. Hold the TW points one inch directly below the navel and in the soft notch of the throat in between the clavicle points. 3 mins
4. With your finger and thumb joined in a circle place them on the temples while fingers are holding the main Neurovasculars on the forehead (the mellow Mudra). 3 mins
5. Sedate Triple Warmer using the acupressure points (if necessary also give it a quick bust of strengthening; See below).
6. Strengthen Spleen using the acupressure points
7. Hook Up

*Strengthening Triple Warmer*

Sometimes, when we are in adrenal compromise then we need to balance our Triple Warmer energy by sedating it and then strengthening it. I know, I know, this goes against everything that you have understood or read, or been told about how to best balance TW. But it is true!

Triple Warmer is designed to help us stay alive, and in its wisdom it desperately tries to keep the status quo (because we are alive so we must be OK!). But that isn’t what we need to be able to live our most healthy, radiant lives. So sometimes we need to give TW a little bit of extra help in being able to support changes. Giving TW strength in order to reassure it and balance it within our whole body system.

There are two ways of doing this.

1. Trace the TW meridian forward with the little finger of your opposite hand. Do so very very slowly. Remember, you are reassuring TW.
2. Do the Three Step technique with TW acupoints: Hold first set of sedating points for 3 minutes each side. Hold the strengthening points for 1 minute each side. Hold the control points for 2 minutes each side. Follow by strengthening spleen.

I often find that this is necessary at some point as people are moving through transition. We will explore this more later in the PAM program, in the month that addresses what to do when working with a client whose presenting health issue no longer improves.

And it is very apparent when strengthening TW is necessary as the Meridian Energy Test will be weak. When the TW MET is weak I always check via to see the Pulse test to see if TW is also over-energized. If
it is then I will first look to sedate or balance TW in other ways. But if it is only showing up as under-
energized then I will work with the above techniques to help give TW strength.

It is worth re-emphasising here what we discussed in the last teleconference; that when working to 
balance the adrenal glands you may need to move very slowly with a client, perhaps only working with 
emphasis on the adrenal glands themselves for a matter of minutes. And then getting feedback from 
your client after the session has completed and integrated. ‘How did you feel after the previous 
session?’ is a great way to open up the exploration of whether the adrenal work that you engaged in 
was easily integrated, or whether TW (and therefore the Adrenal glands) reacted against the work done. 
Once you have your baseline understanding of how much energy work the adrenal glands can manage 
without becoming reactive, then you can safely move forward with the client and balancing adrenal 
health. You may find that there are some ways of working (for example, electrics) that the client can 
easily manage to integrate post session, but that the Adrenal protocol tends to knock them out 
everytime. You’ll likely find that it will be very specific to each person. In this respect the integration 
techniques that you do to end and integrate the session will be very important and personally, I work a 
lot with Radiant Circuits and figure 8s to close a session when we have worked with adrenal health. 
( Maybe a good 20 minutes on integration techniques).

OK, we’ll explore these concepts in practice our next video.

With love,

Prune