

Adrenal Fatigue Providers Handout

Fatigue can be complex if you do not have an approach. With some simple understanding about 80% of your 'overwork' fatigue patients will be manageable and actually get better with simple treatment. The other 20% are more complex and are beyond the scope of this approach.

Office Visit Flow:
Table 1: First Visit

Goals	Standard	Exceptions
Establish clinical diagnosis	Usually a classic history for burn out, low reserves, pushing it.	If they do not fit the clinical picture, I wait for labs to start treatment and consider other diagnosis (depression, cancer, thyroid, anemia, DM, etc).
Order labs	As Below	
Start treatment: Life Style	Start plan with low hanging fruit life style changes (generally pick one or two to emphasize)	
Start treatment: Supplements	Level 1 supplements	I generally will also start pregnenolone for menopausal symptoms (hot flashes, mood changes, etc)
Set Reasonable expectations	Will feel a little better if they can just turn off the tap (main lifestyle changes). Much better if do that and take supplements. Expect 30-50% in the next 6-12 weeks.	

Cardinal Symptom: generally fatigue rating or energy rating that you will track.

Start

Best Day: /10 #d/w
 Worst Day: /10 #d/w
 Average Day: /10 #d/w

Follow up

Best Day: /10 #d/w
 Worst Day: /10 #d/w
 AverageDay: /10 #d/w

2-3 week later Phone follow up on labs and if needed answer a few simple questions or add/emphasize treatment for whatever stage of adrenal fatigue they have or wait until second visit.

6-8 weeks later Second Visit approximately 6 weeks later (I do not like to see back too soon or supplements take about 4-6 weeks to help)

Table 2: Follow up visits

Goals	Standard	Exceptions
Check in on symptoms	Expect that they will be feeling better, generally 30-50%.	Some are 80% or >, some very little, sometimes anxiety increases as they are getting better (more cortisol, if so start Theanine-Serine)
Review labs	Assign to Stage as Below	
Check on lifestyle changes	How did they do? Coach to what they need.	

Add treatments as needed: lifestyle changes		
Add treatments as needed: Supplements	Generally will add next level supplement if they are not 30-50% better.	If labs not consistent with fatigue or not improving with supplements, Consider awesome foursome (as cortisol and other hormones are synthesized in mitochondria) and other dx: chronic infection, cancer, depression, etc (see fatigue ddx).

3 months later Third Visit: flow about the same as second visit. If improving great! If not, consider adding HRT or Awesome foursome or other dx. Re-check labs to see how symptom resolution or not correlates with labs. If not resolving consider propagating factors like chronic infections, toxins, GI issues, etc and work on those.

See TABLE 2 above for flow.

Future follow-ups are mostly fine tuning.

Prognosis:

Tell them that if they succeed in turning off the tap (stopping the things that are creating the adrenal fatigue) that mopping up floor (adrenal repair and restoration of normal function) to recover usually takes about:

- 6 months for stage 1
- 12 months for stage 2
- 24 months for stage 3

Table 3: Provider Overview

Adrenal	All	Later or Selected Patients
History	Prolonged Stress or Illness, mid afternoon crash, fatigue, salt or sugar cravings.	Gradual progression of symptoms, anxiety->tired/wired->tired. extreme menopausal symptoms (hot flashes, mood changes, brain fog), dizziness.
Exam	Early none	Low BP, pupils weak, waxy skin
Testing		
• Standard Fatigue Labs	CBC, CMP, TSH, B12, HBA1C, CRP (cardioCRP/hsCRP or ESR), 25OH vit D	RBC Mg (if myalgia's predominant or cramping) Vitamin D (especially if mood issues or bone pain)
• Adrenal Labs	DHEA and am Cortisol	Sex Hormones: Estradiol, Progesterone, Testosterone, ACTH

Table 4a: Lab AM CORTISOL (or for shift workers, within an hour of waking)

Normals (3-21)	Level
Extremely Low (consider Addison's)	<4
Very Low	5-9
Low	10-14
Normal	15-20
High	21-25
Very High (consider Cushings or acute stress: fear of blood draws, other)	>25

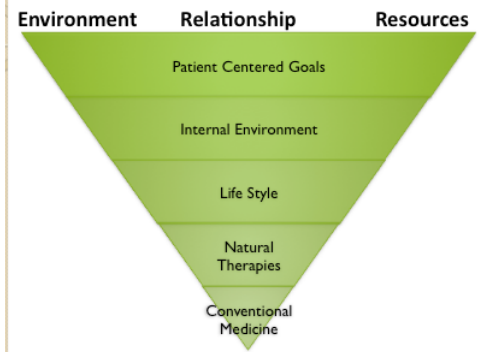
Table 4b: Lab DHEA (first am too, not DHEA-S)

Approx nl's	20 y/o (DHEA falls approx 2%/yr)	40	50	60
Men (180-1250 ng/dL)	1000-1250	Approx 700-800	Approx 600-700	Approx 500-600
Women (130-980)	800-980	500-600	400-500	300-400

Categories of Adrenal Fatigue

	Cortisol	DHEA	treatment
Stage 1	High or Normal	Normal or Low	Lifestyle/Supplements Stage 1
Stage 2	Normal or Low	Low	Above plus supplements Stage 2
Stage 3	Low	Low	Above plus supplements Stage 3

IM4Us Treatment Pyramid



Rebuilding Tired Adrenals

When someone has prolonged ongoing stress the body responds by shifting to make more stress hormone (Cortisol) and away from making other hormones (Progesterone, Testosterone, and Estrogen).

Early on people usually feel anxious or on edge and later people get tired. If it goes on long enough your body cannot make enough stress hormone and people start to feel tired, fragile, take longer to heal and have mood swings or for women more challenges in menopause and perimenopause .

The good news is that this can be helped.

First, many need to learn how to eat more regularly, relax, sleep better and drink more water and less caffeine. (this is like turning off the faucet).

Next, many need to rebuild their ability to make your hormones with proper nutrition and supplements (this is like mopping up the floor).

RECOMMENDATIONS (your provider will check what they feel is most important)

	Stage 1: TURN OFF THE FAUCET	
	Life Style	
	Stop Caffeine (taper by 50% every few days)	
	<u>Regular Meals</u> (3-5 meals a day) Eat Breakfast Higher protein, complex carbohydrates, and good fats (cut out the sweets and soda's)	
	<u>Stress Management</u> (do it often) Breathing Exercises Stress Handout Regular relaxing movement: Tai Chi, Yoga, etc.	
	<u>Healthy Sleep:</u> (minimum of 8 hours a night) Sleep Handout Bed Rest Therapy: plan a weekend to stay in bed as much as you can.	
	Oral Rehydration Solution(ORS): $\frac{3}{4}$ water, $\frac{1}{4}$ apple juice and a pinch of salt. For most drink a quart a day of ORS and a quart of water.	
	Supplements:	
	Vitamin C - 1000mg	2x a day
	B-complex/B 50 - thiamine, B3, B5, B6, B12	2x a day
	Magnesium - 500 -1000 mg, start 250	2x a day
	Omega 3 fish oils - 1-3 gm	1-2x/d
	Chamomile Tea (if anxious)	As needed
	L-Theanine 150mg (if anxious) (best brand: Theanine Serine-Source Naturals)	1 to 3 times a day as needed for anxiety

	Stage 2	
	WOMEN: Pregnenolone 10mg (best brand: Ortho Molecular Labs) consider low dose DHEA	2x a day
	MEN: DHEA 25mg Consider low dose Pregnenolone	2x a day
	Stage 3	
	<u>Adrenal Glandulars</u> Metagenics: Adrenogen®: OR Biotics: Cytozyme AD	Dosing: 1-3 tabs every morning, then add 1-3 tabs right as you go to sleep, then add 1 in afternoon if still having afternoon drop in energy.

Most supplements can be found at Whole Foods, Olivers, or Trader Joes. They are often less expensive on Vitacost.com or iherb.com

Note: Pregnenolone 10mg is harder to find. I recommend starting with Vitacost.com (best Pregnenolone brand: Ortho Molecular Labs) or Dollar Drug.

(diagram courtesy of Dr. Wilson)

