The Silent Key To Menopausal Wellness: Your Adrenals Transcript

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Welcome and adrenal overview

Hi, ladies. Welcome back, Dr. Sharon Stills here. Your host Day 3 already. Oh my God are you blown away. Are you excited for today? I'm excited for today.

And what I want to do is talk to you today about your adrenal glands. So as you can see, every morning I'm coming on just for like a 15 minute chat just to say hi and point out some highlights that I think are really important for you to know the things that have served me, to help me serve my patients over the last 23 years.

And so we often hear, oh, we don't need to worry about replacing hormones, because when we go through menopause, our adrenals will take over and start producing for us.

The adrenals are these little tiny glands that sit on top of our renal glands, our kidneys, adrenal. And they have a lot to do with our stress levels.

And by the time you get to menopause, there's a good chance your adrenals are like, hasta la vista. They've checked out already and they are not producing any hormones for you.

How stress and lifestyle affect the adrenals

And so it's really important we go in and look at our adrenals, love our adrenals and start to replenish and refuel our adrenals. I burnt my adrenals out.

I was in my late 20s. I used to think it was super cool that I could stay up all night and only sleep for hours, and my adrenals didn't think that was super cool.

And of course, you know, we all have our levels of stress, whether it's a job loss or a death in the family, or a breakup or dealing with what's going on in the world, I mean, there's so many different ways to let stress come into your life.

And I'm going to talk about stress in another talk. maybe tomorrow, but our adrenals take the brunt of it. Our adrenals also if we don't sleep at the right time, if we don't eat at the right time, if we're exposed to too many toxins and that could be EMFs or pesticides or glyphosate, we're gonna talk about that, too.

our adrenals can get stressed out. And so a lot of you have probably heard and I love social media, but there's just a lot of B. S. that's spouted on there from whether it's influencers well-meaning, not well-meaning, that don't really understand medicine, that haven't spent 23 years in the trenches in clinical practice, and I can tell you that a lot of things that sound good, or may even make sense physiologically are not really what's happening in the real world.

So a lot of you may have heard that your cortisol is elevated, and that's why you've got belly fat, and that's why you're stressed and that's why you're tired.

And that may be true, but what I see in clinical practice, more than that, is that you have gone through the part where you have elevated cortisol, and cortisol is our stress hormone.

So when there's stress our adrenal is put out cortisol, which is a good thing that can be lifesaving and helps to dampen inflammation. And although chronic inflammation is not what we're looking to experience, but acute inflammation, our body needs to shut that down, right?

Testing cortisol with a four-point saliva test

That, you know, could be life threatening. But what happens is, at some point, if everything has become life threatening, the inbox, the dishes in the sink, the neighbor dog barking too loud, the boss is over demanding you get what I'm saying.

Like just life, right? We're all living life. We are not, I always say that it's easy to be a monk and go meditate on a mountain, but, you know, come back to life and have a family and have a work environment and have a community and all these things, and then see how stressed you are or and so anyway, getting a little off there, but so often we have secreted our cortisol and even but I see it now sometimes in teens I treat but certainly often by our 30s and definitely our 40s, our adrenals are done.

They're like, we can't do this anymore. Instead of having high cortisol, we have cortisol levels that have crashed. And now the treatment is actually bioidentical cortisol hydrocortisone replacement instead of dampening cortisol.

So again what did I talk about yesterday with hormones testing. Guess same thing with the adrenals. And yesterday I said saliva was not an accurate way to test sex hormones.

But it is the accurate and gold standard way to test your cortisol levels. Cortisol is most bioavailable to be picked up for measurements in the saliva.

Now, it's not just about getting one reading because our adrenals and we are very cyclical creatures and we have circadian rhythms, and when we can get in tune with the circadian rhythms, everything works better.

So it's very important to do a four point. You want to ask your physician for a four point salivary cortisol test. And what you want to see is that your levels are high in the morning.

So the analogy I use is it's like you're going skiing and you're sleeping and you're on the ski lift, and the ski lift takes you up to the top of the mountain.

So when you wake up in the morning, Kabam, high, high cortisol levels and you are ready to ski, you have a lot of energy to be on the slopes all day. And as you go down skiing, you go down the slopes all day to when you are done and your cortisol levels are low because you just had a full day on the slopes, and now it's time to go to sleep and high cortisol levels can be a cause of why you can't fall asleep.

So we want to check the four points. We want to check the morning. The cortisol awakening response. We want to check your noon levels. We want to check your afternoon levels.

And we want to check your midnight levels, your evening levels. And sometimes we see boom, boom, boom. We see like major ski slopes.

Supporting adrenal health with sleep, food, and boundaries

And instead of just one ski slope, sometimes we see flatline. Never made it up the mountain. Sometimes we do see that high cortisol. Sometimes I see it where you're just secreting it all day long.

Often I see low in the morning and high at night. So that means your hypothalamic pituitary axis, your brain talking to your adrenal all glands is off.

It's like a bad game of telephone. And so we have to re, restrung nature re communicate reeducate the connection between the brain and the adrenals while we're also improving levels.

So when we test and see these four levels, we can then maybe you need hydrocortisone or adaptogenic herbs or vitamin C or pantothenic acid. And please, if you take a B vitamin one B vitamin and a high dose, take a b-complex with it.

Because if you take just one B vitamin in a high dose and you don't take the full spectrum, you can deplete the

other B vitamins. So sometimes we need to raise cortisol in the morning and lowered at the night.

And it's totally different treatments. So again by doing it's a simple test. You do it in the comfort of your own home and you get to know what is your circadian rhythm.

When do you need support? Because yes, we can feel wired and tired and we think that means our cortisol is high, but we can feel wired and tired and our cortisol can be low.

Now again, it's not just about testing and then taking a supplement. It's also about lifestyle. And so our adrenals are affected by our sleep, by our sugar intake, by our alcohol intake, by how we respond to stress, by always saying yes, by learning, you know.

So these are some of the things that get in the way of good adrenal function. So what do we want to do? We want to prioritize sleep. Every hour you get before midnight, according to traditional Chinese medicine, is worth four hours after doesn't mean you get to sleep less.

But being asleep and in bed by 10:00,10:30 sleeping, certainly, is crucial. Waking up and getting outside and putting your feet on the ground and looking and seeing the sunrise.

Not directly, of course. Watching the sunset. Teaching your body, turning off the lights at night or putting on your blue block or glasses, or utilizing candles.

But being in tune with the natural rhythms is going to help your adrenal glands. Learning that if it's a yes, it's a yes. And if it's not, it's a no. Thank you.

Not interested. Not for me, not today. Maybe another time, but really learning to tune in to what feeds your soul. Speaking of feeding. Making sure you're eating the diet that's right for you.

Now, we talk a lot during the summit about prioritizing protein, and that is truly important. Making sure you have enough protein. And if you have weak adrenals, often you need to have some protein within an hour of waking up to stabilize your blood sugar levels so your cortisol doesn't crash.

So intermittent fasting may not be right for you. Learning what's right for you is what's most important. Because I can have a hundred patients in a room, they can all have adrenal issues and they're all going to have different instructions. For me.

There might be some overlap.

Adrenals, thyroid, and next topics

Y'all might be taking an adrenal extract or one of my adrenal herbal potions that I mix up, or hydrocortisone or my Adrenal Boost Supreme, or vitamin C or B-Complex or Pantothenic acid, or all the things you may be getting some sacrifice at night, which is possible.

Title serene. If your cortisol is high and you're going to get life instructions about your sleep or about your stress, and it's going to be different for everyone, right? Because we all have different reasons for why our organs are not functioning.

And so it's really important that you start to pay attention to your adrenal glands and that you realize it's not a quick fix, just like detoxing is not a quick fix, which we're going to talk about.

There is no five day metal cleanse or five day parasite cleanse. Detoxing is a well thought out, approach that takes time, that doesn't stress the body.

And it's the same with replenishing the adrenal glands. If you're adrenal glands are shot, which mine were, then it is

a lifelong love affair of supporting and nourishing your adrenal glands, of not staying up too late, of keeping a consistent bed time, of taking alcohol out of your life, or mainly out of your life only on special occasions if that's important to you.

On moving your body the way your body needs to be moved. If you have very low adrenal glands and you do high cardio impact, your adrenal glands are just going to go lower because they're tired.

And so starting with that for point cortisol, you can start to get to know where your adrenal glands are. And then you can do the things with your physician that are going to help support you.

I'm going to talk about stress. I guess I'm going to do it tomorrow because it kind of rolls into this about what is stress. We all have stress. It's not getting rid of stress.

It is just learning to dance with stress. It's learning to have a relationship with stress. It's learning to respond rather than react. So the other thing we're going to talk about is your thyroid gland.

You cannot go fix your thyroid without paying attention to your adrenal glands. This is very important. They kind of sit on a seesaw. So if your adrenals are shut and you start to supplement or, you know, repair your thyroid, maybe with some bioidentical thyroid hormone, but you haven't paid attention to the adrenals, the thyroid goes up and the adrenals go down.

So what I do in my practice, and what you want to look for a doctor to do, is I for point cortisol test someone. I figure out what's going on with their adrenals.

I look at their lifestyle, look at the support they need. I build their adrenals back for minimum of four weeks, sometimes eight weeks, 12 weeks. It just depends upon the degree they need support.

And then we put the thyroid piece in and I'm going to talk to you about thyroid and what's being overlooked. I guess tomorrow I'll be stress. So the next day thyroid.

So be sure to tune in and hear what I have to say about stress and your thyroid. And then we'll probably do detox because I mentioned that. And then we'll see.

We'll have a surprise for the last day. So anyway, adrenal love, adrenal TLC, there's a lot more. But I just I'm just trying to give you some important factors.

Get you thinking, get you curious, get you questioning your doctors, and get you the best medical support and advice that you can get so you can have an amazing Menopause Transition.

So. Here's to happy adrenals. Here's to Day 3 and an another amazing day of conversations. Enjoy them. Learn, grow, laugh, cry all the things. This is your Menopausal Transition and I hope to this is your Menopausal Transition.

And I'm just grateful to be a part of it.