

All About Adaptogens

By Seneca B. Anderson, DOM, ND, L.Ac.

The majority of people we see today have maladaptive stress response (MSR). This manifests as adrenal fatigue or failure. MSR is even affecting young children today. It is no wonder, given the sorry state of the standard American diet, loaded as it is with refined sugars such as high fructose corn syrup, and poor quality saturated fats. Add to this mix an over exposure to electromagnetic pollution from our computers and cell phones, a generous sprinkling of heavy metals (powerful neurotoxins), and it's a wonder any of us can function at all. Unfortunately most multi vitamins aren't of much value in dealing with MSR. It is essential that we eat foods that are really nourishing to our bodies, get good quality sleep, exercise, and protect ourselves from electromagnetic and other forms of pollution.

Between 1960 and 1982 there were 1009 clinical and pharmacological studies on medicinal plants useful in increasing stamina and survival in harmful environments. The Russian Toxicologist Lazarev introduced the concept of Adaptogens, medicinal plants that could safely increase the state of "non-specific resistance" in stress. The stress protective activity of the adaptogens is associated with regulation of homeostasis of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis.

Adaptogens are defined as, "Herbal preparations that increase attention and endurance in fatigue, and reduce stress-induced impairments and disorders related to the neuroendocrine and immune systems." Additionally, the Adaptogens are metabolic regulators that have been found to improve carbohydrate metabolism, and counter the catabolic processes associated with any form of stress on the body. The neuro-protective effects are especially important, and could be of value for the prevention of Alzheimer's disease.

I personally regard Holy Basil, Rhodiola Rosea, and Ashwaganda as the "Holy Trinity" of Adaptogens. These products are found in both HPA Adapt and Adaptocrin in our Nutrition Shoppe, both reasonably priced products suitable for most people.

Stop by our Nutrition Shoppe to help select the Adaptogen product that's best for you!

