

The Three Major Triggers of Illness and the Three Organ Systems They Affect

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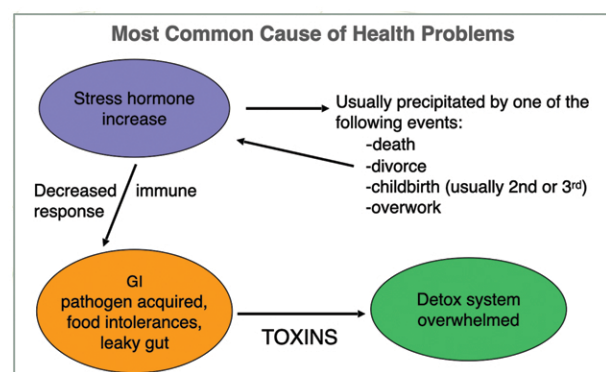
Welcome to part two of my functional medicine series. In the June 2020 article, I explained and defined functional medicine. Today, I will be talking about the three major triggers that cause our hormonal systems to get out of balance and start the cascade of symptoms leading to chronic disease. If this sequence of events goes unchecked, it will end up affecting your entire body, which functional medicine divides into three systems.

Every week, people come into my office asking the following questions.

Why would my adrenals get burned out?

Why is my thyroid not functioning well?

Why don't I have a sex drive anymore?



There are three major triggers, or initiators, that cause the hormone systems to get out of balance.

1 Emotional Stress

2 Dietary Stress

3 Pain and Hidden Inflammation

Any one of the above stressors will trigger a problem with the adrenal system, the thyroid, the gut and the detoxification system. Unfortunately, many of us have issues with all three triggers. Even if your body was functioning perfectly at the end of 2019, there is a good chance your hormonal system is starting to fail from the stress of our world.... COVID-19, protests, political division, economical challenges and impeachment. We have taken hit after hit this year, and your perception of these challenges can be enough to start the cascade of chronic illness.

Emotional stress comes down to how we perceive an event. It is not that an event occurred, rather, it is how you perceive this event that is the most important thing in generating a stress response.

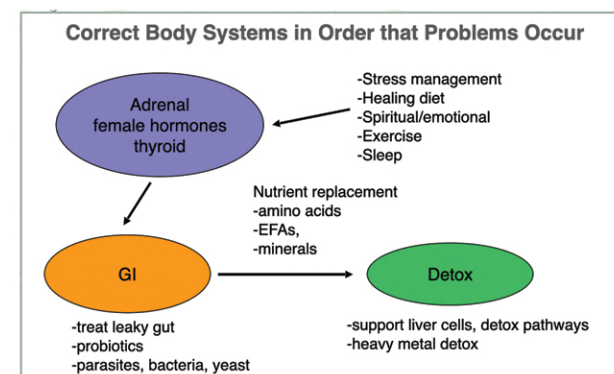
Diet can also be one initiator of illness. Eating too many carbs and sugar, having wildly fluctuating blood sugar, skipping meals, not eating at all, or eating dairy, wheat, GMO corn and soy can all be initiators in the breakdown of the system.

Pain and Inflammation is the final initiator of disease and is where Functional Medicine shines. Pain is obvious. If you have chronic pain, your body goes into fight or flight mode. When we live in fight or flight mode for too long, the hormonal system eventually collapses. Hidden inflammation is where the bulk of Functional Medicine work is done. Hidden inflammation is a code word for toxins, chemicals, heavy metals, pathogens, parasites, fungal infections, yeast infections, or bacterial infections. Many people have a gut pathogen or some kind of chemical or heavy metal toxicity that is causing hidden inflammation. This inflammation initiates the breakdown of the hormonal system. The only way to discover hidden inflammation is through lab testing. If we can find the sources of hidden inflammation, we hit a home run every single time and symptoms disappear.

In most people, this is how the stress response is initiated and ends up affecting the three body systems. First, there is some sort of emotional or spiritual crisis. Someone loses a job, gets a divorce, experiences a death in the family, or becomes disconnected from spirit. The body goes into fight or flight mode for an extended period of time which then triggers a collapse of the neuroendocrine system. The adrenals, the thyroid, the brain and the sex hormones start to fall apart. Eventually, the system becomes catabolic, where it starts to eat itself to make basic building blocks to keep the stress system running, and toxins start to build up.

Next, the digestive system starts to crash as well. Foods that have always been eaten, start to cause problems and leaky gut begins. Pathogens are acquired because the immune response starts to falter and the body cannot adequately fight off the invaders.

Eventually toxins start to build up and overload the system. We have our normal toxic burden plus the toxins coming from the overwhelmed gut and the detox systems. All of this leads to the breakdown of tissues and organ systems.



My clinical model is a two way street. I use it to explain why you have the symptoms you have and use it to fix the systems in the order that the breakdown occurred. We will address lifestyle factors because the lifestyle factors triggered this cascade in the first place. We must discuss diet, meditation, stress management, sleep, exercise, and nutrient deficiencies. We test the three body systems, identify hidden inflammation and begin working with the neuroendocrine system. Next, we move onto the digestive system. We address leaky gut, probiotics, enzymes, pathogens and whatever else is present on the lab tests. Eventually we start to detox, towards the end of the program. We support liver cells and detox pathways so we can get the toxins out.

I often see that many practitioners rushing to start treatment with detoxification. The problem with this, is that the system is not ready to deal with ridding the body of toxins, leading to severe side effects and discouragement with the program. There are a multitude of reasons as to why we follow this sequence. One of the main reasons is to avoid or minimize side effects. Another reason is because this clinical model works incredibly well for the majority of people. If you have gotten ill from detoxifying too soon, I encourage you to call and try this functional medicine approach.

Are you feeling fat, tired, anxious and depressed? If so, this clinical model is perfect for you. Schedule a free 15 minute telephone consultation to discuss your individual circumstances online at www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com, or call 239-260-4566 during office hours. If we decide that we are a good fit for each other, you will schedule an hour long functional medicine new patient consultation. We will decide which testing is most appropriate for you and base your natural treatment plan around those results. Telemedicine visits are available. Be sure to check out part three of my functional medicine series in the August 2020 issue.

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