

The Healing Power of Food

Cortisol

Fight or Flight?

When we are under stress, or in the face of danger, the body has an amazing ability to provide enormous short-term strength to cope with what's to come.

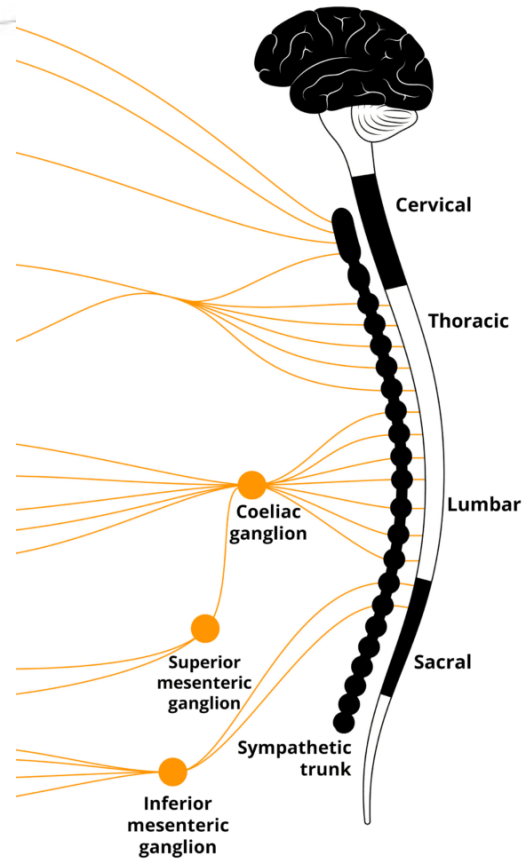
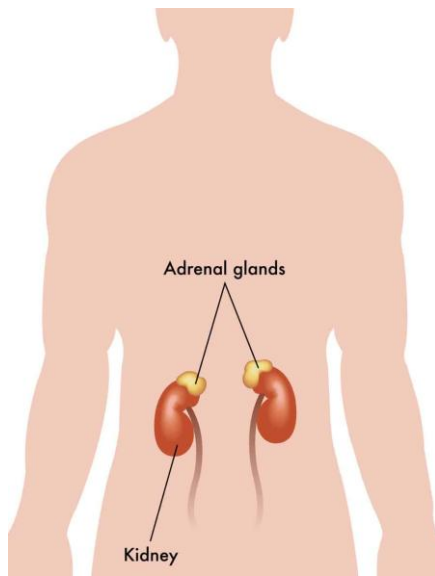
The Fight or Flight response:

- 💧 Fight – anger
- 💧 Flight - fear

The Sympathetic Nervous System

- ◆ Nerves are located in the lumbar region of the spine.
- ◆ Its role is to “turn things on”.
- ◆ These nerves send a message to the adrenal glands to release two hormones: adrenaline and cortisol.
- ◆ Adrenaline increases alertness.
- ◆ Cortisol is to increase levels of sugar (glucose), in the bloodstream to give us energy for the situation.

The Sympathetic Nervous System



The Body's Response to Cortisol

When released, Cortisol causes an increase in all of the following:

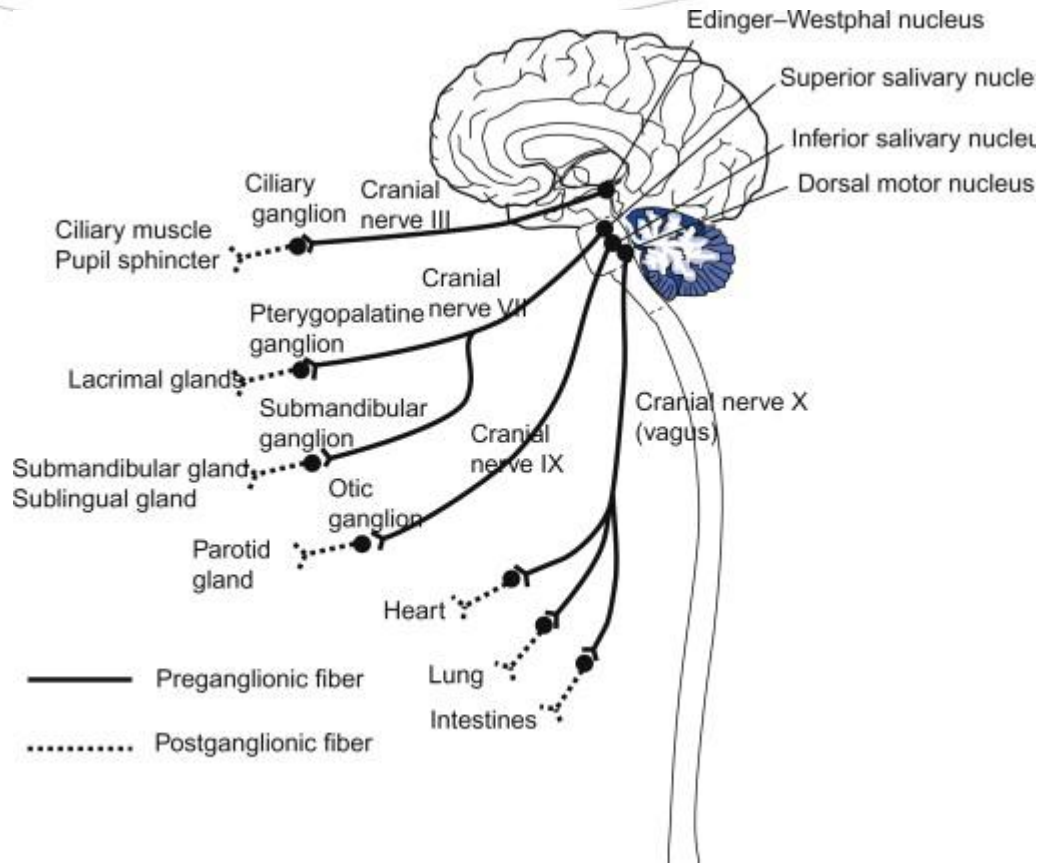
- 💧 heart rate
- 💧 blood pressure
- 💧 blood sugar
- 💧 muscle tension

The Parasympathetic Nervous System

The Parasympathetic Nervous System, located at the base of the brain, “turns things off”. It calms you down and brings you back to normal again. Once the threat is out of the way, the adrenal glands stop releasing Cortisol and Adrenalin.

- 💧 Heart rate now normal
- 💧 the digestive and the immune systems now normal
- 💧 the body’s ability to heal is able to take place
- 💧 reproductive function is now normal.

The Parasympathetic Nervous System



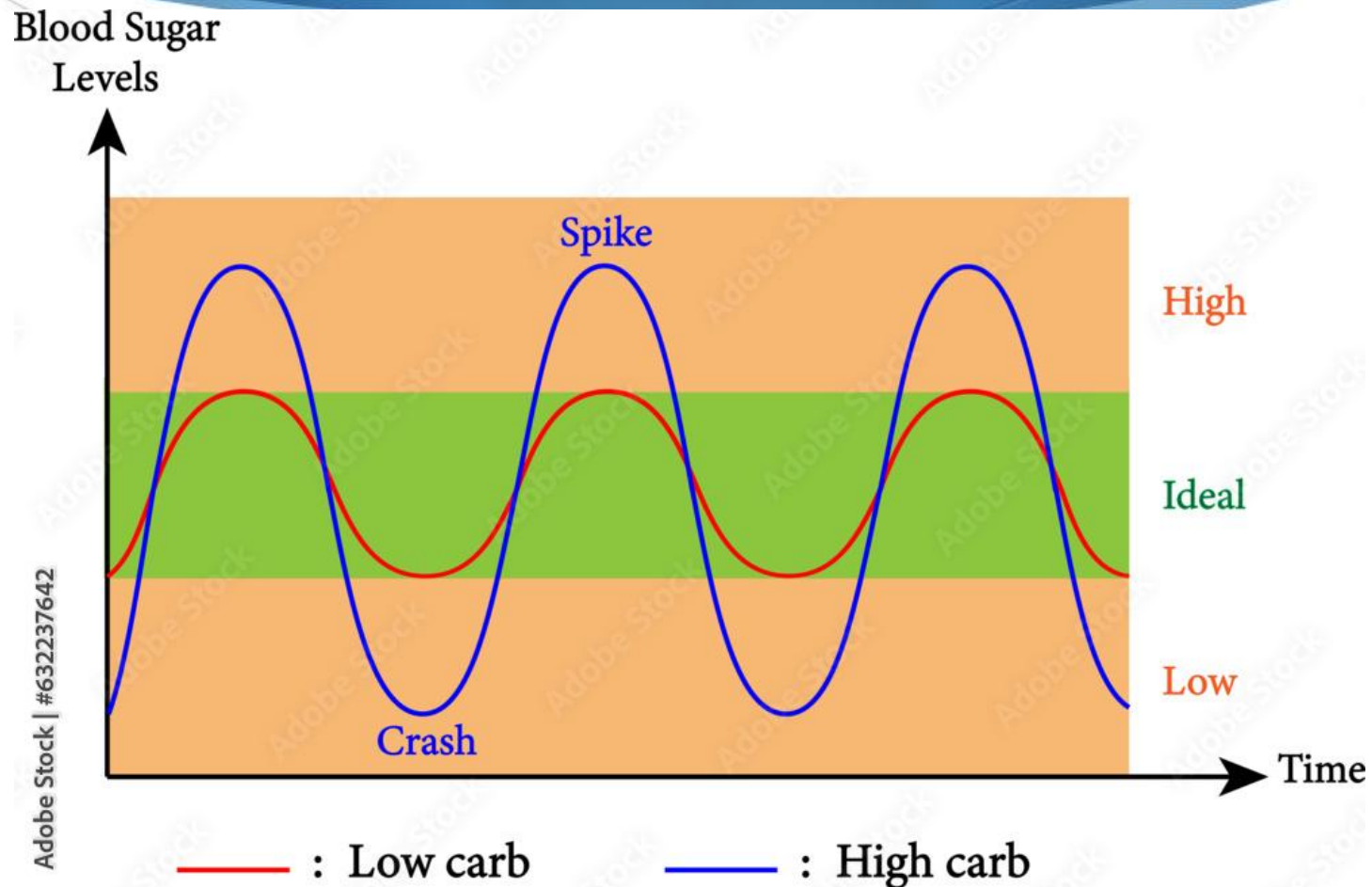
Constant Stress

- ◆ When we are under constant stress, the adrenal glands are constantly pumping out Cortisol and Adrenalin.
- ◆ The parasympathetic nervous system does not get a chance to do its job.
- ◆ The joints and spine are being stressed and prevent proper signals getting to the brain.
- ◆ The body does not make healing a priority and reduces repair, leading to weakened tissues.
- ◆ This can lead to “burn out”.

What else happens?

- ◆ Remember that the job of cortisol is to increase levels of sugar (glucose), in the bloodstream.
- ◆ The body keeps getting the message that you need to refuel after the stressful event, (which is ongoing because you are under constant stress.)
- ◆ So you do as your body says, and eat sugar, (and you crave it constantly because you are constantly under stress.)

Constant highs and lows wear out the pancreas



Symptoms of Stress Response #1

- 💧 Tendency to gain fat around the middle
- 💧 Increased appetite
- 💧 Increased cravings especially sweets and carbs, caffeine and alcohol
- 💧 Energy slump in the afternoon
- 💧 Low functioning immune system – colds, infections
- 💧 Headaches
- 💧 Nail biting, Teeth grinding

Symptoms of Stress Response #2

- ◆ High LDL cholesterol
- ◆ Blood sugar swings
- ◆ Digestive problems
- ◆ Hair loss
- ◆ Irregular or absent periods
- ◆ Difficulty concentrating / forgetfulness
- ◆ Depression

Disease can have emotional roots

- 💧 Cardiovascular diseases
- 💧 Gastrointestinal disorders
- 💧 Respiratory issues
- 💧 Skin conditions
- 💧 Cancer

The way out

Deal with the problem on 3 levels:

- 💧 Nutrition
- 💧 Exercise
- 💧 Emotional support
- 💧 Spiritual support

Reducing emotional stress – verbal abuse

Non-attachment:

When someone else is causing the problem, make a deliberate choice to realise that it's not YOUR problem.

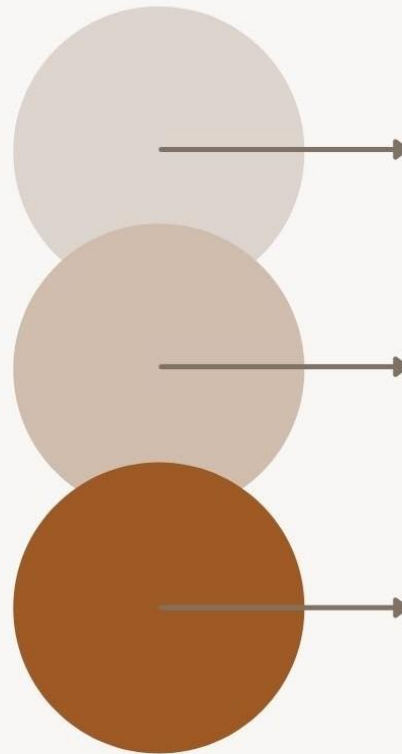
If there's nothing practical you can do about it, then become detached from it.



Reducing emotional stress – physical or situational abuse

Three Choices

For situations causing stress or anxiety



Leave it.

Exit the situation: job, relationship, location.

Change it.

What's in your control to make the situation different?

Accept it 100%.

If the above aren't possible.

Determination

But if the problem is something that YOU need to take ownership of, and can do something about, work out some practical strategies of ways to deal with it.

- ◆ Forgive others where forgiveness is necessary
- ◆ Pray with others about your problems
- ◆ Use Scripture keys
- ◆ Don't give up!

Remember – “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!” Philippians 4:13