

Burnout Syndrome – Last Stage of Exhaustion

By Simon Yu, MD

Fatigue and exhaustion is one of the most common complaints seen in doctors' offices besides depression, anxiety, allergies, hypoglycemia, and aches and pain. Have you ever felt "bone tired?" Have you been so tired that your body feels numb, your brain feels foggy and you feel like a Zombie throughout the day? Are you simply fatigued or are you at the "burnout" stage?

Burnout is not the same as simple fatigue where a good night's sleep and rest will make you feel rejuvenated. Burnout is an absolute crushing exhaustion that will not go away even after a prolonged rest and relaxation. Extra sleep, although desperately needed for an exhausted body and soul, cannot pull you out of the burnout state. It takes a certain amount of energy to sleep. You can be too exhausted to sleep well. Tossing and turning with restless sleep, you wake up feeling tired. Everyone is susceptible to burnout: professional or homemaker, young or old, clergy or entertainer.

What are the signs and symptoms of burnout? Depending upon the severity of burnout, symptoms will vary and may include:

- ◆ Reduced school or work performance
- ◆ Loss of initiative and a sense of hopelessness
- ◆ Craving for sweets for quick energy
- ◆ Distaste for red meat due to poor digestion
- ◆ Hypoglycemic symptoms with swings in mood, concentration and energy level
- ◆ Low blood pressure and sluggishness
- ◆ Prone to anxiety, depression, fear and phobias
- ◆ Dwelling on the past and disinterest in one's present appearance
- ◆ Attraction to stimulants from coffee, chocolate, tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs
- ◆ Disinterest in sex or hypersexual as a means of stimulation
- ◆ Hyperactivity, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), delinquency and suicidal thoughts, especially in younger people

Burnout represents a physical energy breakdown from relentless stress from a physical, financial, emotional, or spiritual level. Emotional stress often provides a major triggering event and can develop over many years. Stress causes depletion of specific vital nutrients faster than they can be replaced by one's dietary intake. Also, under stress, people crave junk food, quick easy high calorie fast foods or alcohol, all of which accelerate one's nutritional imbalance. Heavy metals and other environmental toxins may accumulate during vulnerable periods and accelerate the stage of burnout.

Recovery from burnout is usually slow and gradual and may take several years. One cost effective means of measuring the degree of burnout is tissue mineral analysis taken from a sample of hair. Calcium, magnesium, sodium and potassium levels and their ratios to each other indicate one's metabolic state and uncover one's specific nutritional needs.

In my practice, vitamins, minerals, glandulars, and digestive enzymes, along with specialty products such as homeopathic and herbal remedies, are recommended based upon acupuncture meridian assessment and hair mineral analysis. These nutritional supplements are the foundation of a rejuvenation program. In addition, patients will go through body cleansing and detoxification processes, food allergy and dental evaluations and therapies specific to one's condition. These therapies may include chelation therapy for heavy metal toxicity and parasite cleansing if indicated.

Many people feel that recovery is not worth the effort and look for a quick fix with medication. This attitude assures their failure. Recovery from burnout is analogous to remodeling a damaged house or rebuilding a broken fine antique or musical instrument. It is a complex task which cannot be rushed and must be accomplished in orchestrated stages. The recovery process should include an understanding of the cause of the underlying problems in order to eliminate a continuation of the burnout.

Since the process of recovery is lengthy, in order to be successful, one must make a personal commitment to carry out the dietary, life style and mental attitude changes. Periodic evaluations from acupuncture meridian assessment and hair mineral analysis are essential for monitoring progress. These are some of the many steps to take when you are suffering from burnout. Exhaustion is the mother of all chronic illness. Recovery is gradual but there is hope! More details of the various steps involved in recovery may be found throughout my web site.

Dr. Simon Yu, M.D. is a Board Certified Internist. He practices Internal Medicine with an emphasis on Alternative Medicine to use the best each has to offer. For more information about the subject of this article, and many other topics, as well as patient success stories, visit his web site at www.preventionandhealing.com or call Prevention and Healing, Inc., 314-432-7802. You can also attend a free monthly discussion on Alternative Medicine at Prevention and Healing on the second Tuesday each month at 6:30 pm. Please call to verify the date and reserve your space.



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