



Movement for Hormones



This is probably an article for my female members as it's a brief chat about hormones and how movement can really help. Although you may score brownie points if you know more than your female friends/colleagues etc!

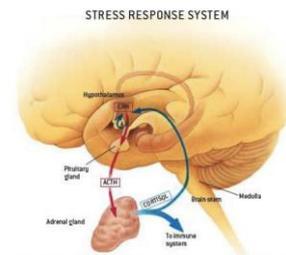
Our energy, immunity, cardiovascular health and overall metabolism are governed by our gorgeous hormones. These chemical messengers are super smart and capable when we are **in balance**.

We have an inbuilt feedback loop that regulates our stress response and in turn our hormones. This means that your Hypothalamus (in the brain) and Pituitary gland react to changing levels in your body and either stimulate or stop hormone production & distribution. Changes in your **nervous system, blood** and **other hormones** can affect their flexibility to the environment.

Sadly due to fast paced living, disturbed sleep, poor nutrition and synthetic chemicals (contraception) these clever little guys struggle to perform and can even shut down.

Chronic stress scrambles natural human cycles; circadian rhythms (24hr sleep/wake cycle), melatonin (sleep hormone), cortisol response & reproduction. The importance of these cycles cannot be underestimated. I will do a post on these soon.

Within seconds of encountering stress, your brain responds (hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis - HPA) by stimulating reactions to encourage you to *run from the tiger* **BUT** there is no tiger! There hasn't been 'a tiger' (the need to truly survive on a daily basis) for a long time but the body cannot tell the difference between perceived threats and real ones. By perceived I mean, worry, anxiety, overthinking etc.



So we have had a stressful situation, perceived or real and our body has:

Healthy Response	Long Term Damage
Raised Blood pressure in the short term helps transport more blood to the brain	Chronic high blood pressure increases the risk of many diseases, such as heart disease and stroke
Hormone disruption - The body's resources are directed at making the stress hormone cortisol to help deal with the immediate threat, at the expense of the production of the steroid hormones, such as oestrogen and testosterone	Long-term diversions of resources to make cortisol will lead to hormonal imbalances and contribute to a wide variety of hormonal issue such as lack of libido and menopausal symptoms
Sugar in your Blood - Increased Insulin Resistance in the short term means that your body won't store any sugar in your liver and muscles cells. It will result in more sugar staying in your bloodstream, which means that more will be available for the brain	Long-term insulin resistance contributes to the development of type 2 diabetes, obesity . High BP and the production of harmful types of cholesterol
Emotional brain being on high alert to look out for threats is a very good thing if you are in danger	If this becomes long term, it will make you more prone to anxiety , as you start to worry about everything and see danger when no danger is present
Digestion halts - The body's resources are directed away from digestion, as this is a non-essential function for survival at the moment	If attention is diverted away from digestion for too long, digestive complaints will result, such as constipation, bloating, indigestion and IBS

(extract taken from The Stress Solution – DR Rangan Chaterjee)

These are just a few of the responses, in essence; We now have an elevated HR & BP, a disabled immune & digestive system, glucose (sugar) drawn from our muscles now ready to be potentially stored as fat if we do not

move and a brain flooded with adrenaline that causes light headiness, dizziness, headaches etc. This awful cycle gets stuck on.

We basically need to get you out of survival mode.

What we mustn't do is add more load to an already overloaded system, so until balance is restored, your practice must look a little more like this:

Easy Pose / sukhasana



- ✓ Find a comfortable way for you to sit cross legged. Place something under your seat, a block, bolster, cushion if necessary. Maybe a blanket under your ankle bones. Release tension. Find stillness
- ✓ Pay attention to your breathing and slowly start to make your exhale longer than your inhale.
- ✓ Set a timer for 5-15 mins and surrender.

Forward Bend / Pashimotanasana



- ✓ With or without a strap – straighten the legs and bend forward from the hips
- ✓ Try to maintain length in the spine
- ✓ Become aware of your breathing, taking 5-10 peaceful breaths
- ✓ Repeat 3/5 times

Rabbit Pose / Sasangasna



- ✓ Start in hero pose with your bottom on your heels
- ✓ Reach around for your heels
- ✓ Tuck your chin in and start to roll the forward to the floor
- ✓ Lift the bottom as your tuck the chin in towards your knees
- ✓ The head rests comfortably on the floor (use a blanket if required)
- ✓ Take 3/5 calming breaths and slowly return placing your hands on the floor in front of you

Try these 3 poses at the beginning or end of your day to strengthen the off switch! It won't happen overnight but the switch also did not get stuck on overnight. Gradually remind your body that everything is ok.

When you are ready to move on from the above, try the full Happy Hormone Flow below.

FULL BODY movement is the long term goal.

Developing a movement practice including, sitting, standing, gentle inversions and backbends will engage all the organs and glands that develop & distribute hormones. A regular varying practice, completed within your current abilities, 3 times a week will show you great hormonal rewards in the long run.

YogaISH!

Happy Hormones Flow

Accompanies Happy Hormones online class



*Hold each posture for 3 breaths



*Try to remain present with your body. If your thoughts wander, just bring them back to your practice kindly



*Complete 3 x a week

