



Supporting Healthy Cortisol Levels



Why Cortisol Matters

Cortisol helps regulate:

- Energy and focus
- Blood sugar
- Sleep-wake cycles
- Stress response

Healthy cortisol = steady energy, better sleep, and improved resilience to stress



Nutrition

Balance Blood Sugar (MOST important)

Unstable blood sugar and insulin levels can trigger cortisol spikes.

Aim to include the following in each meal:

- Protein (eggs, chicken, Greek yogurt)
- Healthy fats (avocado, nuts, olive oil)
- Fiber-rich carbs (vegetables, oats, quinoa, sweet potatoes)



Key Foods for Cortisol Support

Magnesium-rich (calming):

- Leafy greens
- Pumpkin seeds, almonds
- Black beans, dark chocolate

Vitamin C-rich (adrenal support):

- Bell peppers
- Citrus fruits
- Strawberries
- Broccoli

Omega-3 fats (anti-inflammatory):

- Salmon, sardines
- Chia seeds, flaxseeds
- Walnuts

Gut-supporting foods:

- Yogurt, kefir
- Sauerkraut, kimchi
- High-fiber plant foods



Supplements for Cortisol Balance

First-Line Support

- **Magnesium (glycinate or threonate):** supports calm, sleep, and stress response
- **Omega-3 (fish oil):** reduces inflammation and supports mood
- **Vitamin C:** supports adrenal function during stress
- **Adaptogens:** help the body adapt to stress
 - Ashwagandha
 - Rhodiola
 - Holy basil

Targeted Support When Needed

- **L-theanine:** promotes calm focus
- **Phosphatidylserine:** helpful for elevated nighttime cortisol
- **B vitamins (especially B5):** support energy and adrenal function
- **Probiotics:** support the gut-brain-stress connection

Reach out for any specific supplement recommendations

You can find several of our favorite supplements here:

us.fullscript.com/welcome/wellkcks

Lifestyle: Daily Habits That Regulate Cortisol

Anchor Your Morning

- Get **10–20 minutes of sunlight within 30–60 minutes of waking**
- Eat a **protein-rich breakfast**
- Avoid immediately checking your phone

Be Strategic with Caffeine

- Wait **60–90 minutes after waking**
- Avoid after **1–2 PM**
- Always pair with food

Don't Skip Meals

- Eat every **3–4 hours** if prone to crashes
- Include **protein + fat + carbs** each time

Protect Your Evenings

- Dim lights after sunset
- Limit screens / use blue light blockers
- Create a **wind-down routine**

Reduce Hidden Stress

- Limit notifications
- Avoid constant multitasking
- Build buffer time into your day

Daily Nervous System Support

- Deep breathing (5 minutes)
- Time outdoors
- Stretching or gentle movement
- Journaling or mental “brain dump”

Exercise Smarter

- Favor: walking, strength training, yoga, Pilates
- Limit excessive high-intensity cardio if stressed or fatigued

Get Outside

- Daily fresh air or short walks
- Nature exposure (even 10 minutes helps)

Prioritize Sleep

- Aim for **7–9 hours nightly**
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule
- Cool, dark, quiet environment

Prioritize Connection

- Spend time with supportive people
- Engage in activities that bring joy or laughter

Match Support to Your Symptoms

High or “wired” cortisol:

- Prioritize magnesium, omega-3s, adaptogens
- Focus on regular, balanced meals

Low cortisol / burnout:

- Emphasize protein, regular meals, and B vitamins
- Avoid under-eating

Tired but wired at night:

- Consider magnesium in the evening
- Support sleep routine and stress reduction

Common Triggers That Disrupt Cortisol

- Skipping meals or under-eating
- Excess caffeine
- High sugar / processed foods
- Overtraining without recovery
- Poor sleep habits

Reach out anytime with questions or for more personalized recommendations

www.wellkcks.org

Text us at 913-513-2166