



SUPPLEMENTS FOR STRESS

Whether we like it or not, we are all more stressed. I believe it is because we are overloaded and life is more complex. We all seem to have a lot more to do and a lot more complexity in our lives, often juggling many balls. This is usually the case with women as they are often juggling home and family with work. Because we have email, text messages and cell phones, we are able to do a lot more than we used to. We see other people seemingly doing a lot more but we don't know the price they are paying for it.

I think everyone should take a general multivitamin and omega 3 fish oil for their health on a regular basis. Omega 3 fish oil is known to be anti-inflammatory and to help cells work more efficiently. As a result, they have far reaching benefits by reducing inflammation, heart disease, blood pressure, cholesterol, stroke, diabetes, allergy, autoimmune diseases, breast and bowel cancer, osteoarthritis and even intelligence, learning, depression, anger, hostility and the ability to cope with stress. A reasonable dose for a healthy person would be 1000-2000mg. Higher amounts are necessary for stress or disease and checking with the family doctor first would be a good idea.

All of the vitamins are very important for health but we will select a few that are particularly good as a foundation and for general health, stress and the skin.

Vitamin C is well known as an antioxidant, great for the immune system, an antihistamine and of course great for the skin. Clients with Vitamin C deficiency will have bleeding gums and fragile blood vessels. The highest levels are needed for the adrenal glands that help us with stress. Many people don't get enough fruits and vegetables, and even if they do, how long have they been in the fridge and how have they been grown and processed? In addition, any form of stress easily drains the body of vitamin C. Supplementation by mouth is a good idea. I suggest 500-1000mg daily as a normal dose. For illness or stress, I suggest 2000-6000mg daily over 2-3 doses. Some people get diarrhoea if they take too much.

Although vitamin D is named such, it is really a hormone similar to cholesterol which is made by the body in response to sun exposure. Vitamin D regulates 1000 genes and its deficiency is now at epidemic proportions around the world. It is responsible for reducing nearly everything. Its effects include reducing 17 different cancers (including breast, bowel, lung), heart disease, osteoporosis, weight loss, anxiety and depression, colds and flu etc. We are typically told that we must keep the sun off the face to prevent ageing. This is still a good idea but some general body sun should be obtained to prevent deficiency of vitamin D. In people with type 1 skin or vulnerable people, it may be necessary to supplement vitamin D orally on a regular basis to prevent a deficiency. A blood test from your family doctor would detect a deficiency.

Zinc is important for over 200 reactions in the body and is well known for its effects in wound healing and therefore collagen production. However it is depleted when there is stress and is needed more when there is infection, allergy and disease. Zinc can be tested by doing the zinc taste test at a pharmacy or health shop to detect whether there is adequate zinc in the body. If the person cannot taste zinc, it is a guide to low zinc stores in the body and then should be taken as a supplement. Your health and skin will benefit.

B- vitamins are good for generating cellular energy. This means the cells work better and do their jobs more efficiently. This plays out in the skin. Various B-vitamins are known to enhance the immune system of the skin and protect it. If someone is particularly sick or stressed, I will often suggest adding a B-Complex to the basic multivitamin and fish oil regime.

Sometimes supplemental probiotics can be quite helpful when there has been infection, diarrhoea, urinary tract infections or even chest infections, antibiotics and drugs. In these situations the body's bowel flora can become unbalanced and contribute to inflammation.