

Stress, Inflammation and PEMF

Stress is a fact of life. We are all going to experience it at different times. Stress can be a good thing if it motivates us and propels us into action. But, stress can also be harmful, especially if it occurs over a long period of time or if we don't have a way to cope with and manage it. If unchecked, stress can negatively affect our emotions causing us to feel anxious, depressed or irritable and angry. The physical signs of stress can be just as damaging and include headache, intestinal distress and sexual dysfunction. Stress also triggers inflammation. Inflammation, like stress, can be positive or negative. The inflammatory response is absolutely necessary for our bodies to heal. If you get a cut, chemicals in your bloodstream rush to the cut and mount an inflammatory response that begins the healing process. This reaction is temporary and goes away as the body repairs itself. If the inflammatory reaction lasts too long it becomes damaging. Inflammation isn't limited just to cuts. It occurs throughout our entire bodies when we are exposed to emotional or physical stress. Inflammation has been directly linked to asthma, immune system disorders, heart attack, high blood pressure and stroke. It has also been linked to premature aging and the visible changes that we want to avoid like fine lines, wrinkles and sagging skin.

Right now you are probably asking yourself how does this happen? How can stress trigger the inflammation that makes me look older, and most important, what can I do about it? When we don't get enough sleep, eat an unhealthy diet, drink too much, breathe in polluted or smoke filled air, and expose ourselves to the harmful rays of the sun, we are stressing our bodies. Our bodies pump out stress hormones that trigger inflammation. You have probably heard about the stress hormone, cortisol. It makes us accumulate fat around our middle and it also encourages the breakdown of collagen, the material in our tissues that lift and support and help to give us a youthful appearance. Add that to when we expose our unprotected skin to the sun. The

ultraviolet rays react with our skin to produce free radicals. These are damaging molecules that cause inflammation. Over time the accumulated cellular damage can be clearly seen.

The good news is that there are things that you can do to slow premature aging caused by inflammation. Getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, staying well hydrated, exercising, cutting down on alcohol, avoiding smoke and wearing sunscreen (at least SPF 30) everyday will give you a great start. These lifestyle changes have a positive effect on cortisol metabolism in our bodies, which helps to reduce inflammation.

And, more good news, The FDA has approved the use of pulsed electromagnetic fields (PEMF) as a safe and noninvasive method to reduce inflammation. Research has repeatedly shown that exposure to therapeutic PEMF reduces edema, one of the first signs of cell damage, and improves circulation. With improved blood flow, much needed oxygen and important nutrients get to the site of cellular damage where they help to reduce inflammation and allow the body's natural healing to take place. The use of PEMF is still relatively new in the United States, and doctors and researchers are still learning about new ways to put this technology to work for us. While healthy lifestyle choices will never be replaced, it is fair to say that soon they may be supplemented by the use of PEMF in our quest for the fountain of youth.

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