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Understanding stress resilience and role of stress adaptogens

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Stress is defined as a state of psychological and/or physiological imbalance resulting from the disparity between situational demand and individual's ability and/or motivation to meet those demands. Without proper rest, exercise and nutrition to counteract these effects, body continues producing stress response until it is fatigued or exhausted. Body tries to adapt to external stressors in terms of a biological pattern that is actually predictable, so that the internal balance, or homeostasis, would be restored and maintained. In its attempt to retain homeostasis, body makes use of its hormonal system, also known as fight or flight response. With this response, body wants things to be resolved fast and easy, that's why it already resorts to releasing hormones and enables to combat stress in most immediate way possible. This struggle of body against stress is the main theme of "General Adaptation Syndrome." It involves two major systems- nervous system and endocrine (or hormonal) system. There are three distinctive stages in syndrome's evolution- alarm reaction (AR), stage of resistance (SR) and stage of exhaustion (SE). Body has its limits to control stress. Limited supply of body's energy to adapt to stressful environment is even more compromised when the body is exposed to the stressor continuously. In spite of balanced and healthy diet and some active coping strategies body is unable to cope up with stress and its impact on body. Stress adaptogens is one of the active coping strategies controls and helps body to adapt to stress. The aim is to summarize and critically analyze level of scientific evidence of stress adaptogens and provide rationale for its use in "Stress". The results showed protective effect of adaptogens is in relation with regulation of homeostasis via HPA axis. Stress adaptogens can improve physical performance, mental alertness and energy levels; reduce oxidative stress in body and balance stress hormones.

Biography

Varsha Khatri is an Aesthetic Physician from Apollo, Hyderabad and has done her Fellowship from Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald and Business studies from IIM (Kolkata). She is one of the principle drivers behind the re- engineering projects for Hospitals, Site Maintenance Organization (SMO) and Disease Management Programs launch in India with Reliance Group of Industries and has successfully managed multiple healthcare projects for various therapeutic areas (Cosmetology, Gastroenterology, Nutrition, Renal, Orthopedics, Oncology, Respiratory and Cardiology). She is also a medico-marketing expert, acknowledged for a broad understanding of the business and emerging healthcare needs across products and services. She has authored several articles and has been part of Cancer Nutrition Guidelines for India with reputed experts. She has been endorsed by peers and awarded by Abbott Nutrition - India for "Cancer Nutrition Guidelines" and "Renal Nutrition Clinical Research". Currently she is a Medical Lead for Pfizer, India handling diversified therapeutic areas which includes Nutrition, Skin and Gastro-enterology, Respiratory etc. She has been credited and recognized amongst her peers as the first in the country to introduce the concept of 'Stress Adaptogens' and the role of Nutrition.

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