



HPA Axis Questionnaire

Patient Name _____ Date _____

The hypothalamus, pituitary, adrenal (HPA) axis is the body's central stress response system. This questionnaire is designed to help assess and differentiate possible dysfunction within this system.

Please score only the items you experience on a scale of 1-4:

1 (This is a **mild** problem) **2** (This is a **significant** problem) **3** (This is a **major** problem) **4** (This is a **severe** problem)

SECTION 1: LOW CORTISOL STATE

1. ___ Lethargic depression
2. ___ Excessive need for sleep
3. ___ Chronic fatigue syndrome
4. ___ Chronic pain
5. ___ Fibromyalgia (musculoskeletal tender points)*
6. ___ Dizziness when you stand or bend
7. ___ Low blood pressure and/or drop of blood pressure on standing*
8. ___ Craving salty foods-pretzels, pickles etc.
9. ___ Poor wound healing*
10. ___ Easy bruising
11. ___ Fatigue
12. ___ Inability to handle even slight stresses
13. ___ Hypoglycemia: dizzy, irritable, or sleepy if you go without food for 4-5 hours; symptoms relieved by food
14. ___ Scars, elbows, nipples, or skin near nails that are unusually dark*
15. ___ Slow healing of cuts*
16. ___ Unstable body temperatures (hot or cold)

SECTION 2: ELEVATED CORTISOL STATE

17. ___ Agitated depression
18. ___ Weight gain around your abdomen, back of neck, and in the face and cheeks*
19. ___ Stretch marks-not from weight loss *
20. ___ Adult onset diabetes
21. ___ Osteoporosis
22. ___ Craving sweets
23. ___ Trouble falling or staying asleep

SECTION 3: ADRENAL HYPERPLASIA

24. ___ Excessive dark male pattern hair growth (women)*
25. ___ Irregular or no periods (not menopausal)
26. ___ Eastern European heritage

HPA Axis Questionnaire: Practitioner Interpretive Key

The goal of this intake sheet is to obtain and collate data that will give you an idea of the presence and type of HPA axis dysfunction in your patient. These symptoms and signs are primarily a compilation from the *Williams Textbook of Endocrinology*—11th edition, as well as recent literature, and lastly, clinical experience. There are three sections divided by lines.

- Section 1 is correlated with **low cortisol** states
- Section 2 is correlated with **high cortisol** states
- Section 3 is correlated with **adrenal hyperplasia**.

*Items should be assessed by physical examination.

Instructions:

Add up the patient's totals for each section. Enter them below over the highest possible score for each section. The totals will indicate which areas to focus on. There is no absolute cutoff to use, rather there is a continuum between normal and dysfunction. Use this information in conjunction with blood testing and salivary cortisol testing.

Section 1: Low cortisol state _____ /64 = _____

Section 2: Elevated cortisol state _____ /28 = _____

Section 3: Adrenal hyperplasia _____ /12 = _____