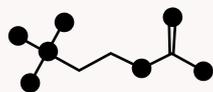




# ***CONQUER YOUR CORTISOL:***

Mastering your stress hormone so you can permanently lose fat



Everything you need to know about rebalancing your body's main stress hormone

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# Meet The Author

I'm Molly McNamee, founder of MFit Workouts and creator of the Safe Burn Method.

Ten years ago, chronic stress took over my life.

I was 30 lbs heavier, having panic attacks, sleeping poorly, and feeling consumed by anxiety. I was also exercising five times more than I do today and following a strict diet — yet my body refused to change.

Eventually, I realized my workouts and lifestyle were causing my body to produce too much **cortisol**, which made my stress skyrocket and my body hold onto fat.

Once I learned how to train and live in a way that balanced my hormones and soothed my stress, everything changed. That's how the **Safe Burn Method** was born — the approach you'll start learning in this e-book.

If you're ready to put these strategies into practice, try the [14-Day Stress & Hormone Reset](#). It's a simple two-week plan to calm your stress system, rebalance your hormones, and jump-start fat loss.



Molly



# What is cortisol?

**Cortisol is one of your body's main stress hormones.**

This hormone is produced and released by your adrenal glands, and it affects almost every organ and tissue in your body.

Here are some of cortisol's key roles:

- Regulates the body's response to stress
- Helps regulate metabolism
- Suppresses inflammation and supports the immune system
- Helps control the body's sleep cycle
- Maintains blood pressure
- Works with insulin to maintain blood sugar levels

Everyone's cortisol levels increase at different times throughout the day. Typically levels are highest between 8-10AM and lowest around midnight. This is normal!

However, if your body is constantly making too much cortisol, then there is a problem.



High levels of cortisol in the body can disturb numerous processes and trigger a variety of health issues.

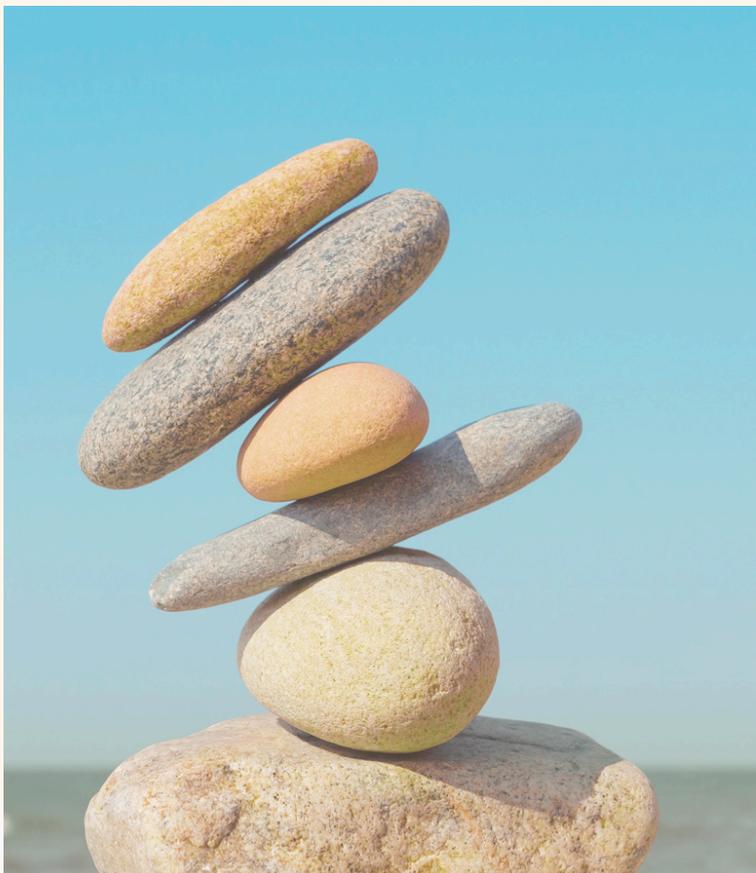
As previously mentioned, cortisol is a stress hormone, and when too much of it is produced, your body is constantly reacting to a threat.

When your body is stuck in a constant state of fight or flight, it shuts down other functions, like digestion.

Over time, this continuous elevation in cortisol can lead to inflammation and an impaired immune system.

Here are just a couple examples of how chronically high cortisol levels can be a problem for your body's functions:

1. Every single time your body is producing cortisol, it is also elevating your blood sugar. Having persistently high blood sugar can lead to Type 2 Diabetes
2. When your body attempts to make more and more cortisol, it starts to use other hormones, like progesterone, to make that cortisol. This then causes estrogen dominance, which makes it difficult to lose and maintain weight.



*Cortisol does amazing things for your body, but you can have too much of a good thing*

# *Do you have high cortisol?*



Obviously if your body is producing too much cortisol, you want to do something about it. But first, we need to determine if that is happening for you!

Here's how we are going to do that:

## **Step 1: Go over symptoms**

There is a checklist for you on the next page with 24 common symptoms of high cortisol. Complete that checklist to see if your symptoms align with your body over-producing the stress hormone.

## **Step 2: Get tested**

If your symptoms align, you'll then continue to Page 7 to see what medical tests can confirm that for you.

# High Cortisol Checklist

**These are common symptoms of high cortisol levels in the body.**

If you check a lot of these boxes, there is a strong chance your body is producing too much cortisol.

- Weight Gain (especially around your waist)
- Puffy Face or Hands
- Low Motivation
- Fatigue
- Insomnia (Difficulty staying asleep OR falling asleep)
- Increased Thirst
- Frequent Urination
- Osteoporosis (thinning of the bones)
- Irregular Menstruation
- Bruising Easily (arms and legs)
- Headaches
- Hair Loss or Skin Issues

- Muscle Weakness
- Bloating or Gas
- High Blood Pressure
- High Blood Sugar
- Emotions Hard To Control
- Trouble Concentrating
- Excessive Sweating
- Depression
- Anxiety & Overwhelm
- Heart Racing Randomly / Increased HR
- Low Sex Drive
- Weak Immune System (get sick multiple times a year)

# Think you have high cortisol after that?

## Here Are Your Next Steps:

1

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Read below to see how to test your cortisol levels, and speak to a doctor about performing the tests.

2

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Adjust your lifestyle and adopt new cortisol-controlling habits. See page 8 for how to do that!

3

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Tweak your workout routine. Read page 13 to learn the dos and don'ts of exercising with high cortisol.

A **cortisol test** measures the amount of cortisol in your body. Because cortisol levels vary throughout the day, it would be smart to order multiple tests to get an accurate result. This test can be performed using blood, urine or saliva. Blood tests are typically collected in the morning, urine is collected over a 24-hour period, and saliva is taken at night.



# *Habits for balanced stress hormones*

Stress and cortisol influence each other. Reducing cortisol can alleviate feelings of stress, and managing stress will lower cortisol levels.

So, the key to reducing the stress hormone is reducing your stress.

This does not have to require a lot of work and time though. You can get your cortisol under control with some simple habits and strategic lifestyle shifts.

These habits are good for you whether your cortisol is high or not. So if you aren't 100% sure your body is producing too much cortisol, these habits are still great to do! If you do have high cortisol though, then they are incredibly impactful.

Your body produces cortisol when the sympathetic nervous system is activated. The habits on the next few pages will help your body activate the parasympathetic nervous system so that you can tap into your body's "rest and digest" state, which lowers cortisol levels.

As you read through this chapter, I encourage you to **PICK ONE HABIT** at a time to introduce into your routine. Do not try to do all of this at once.

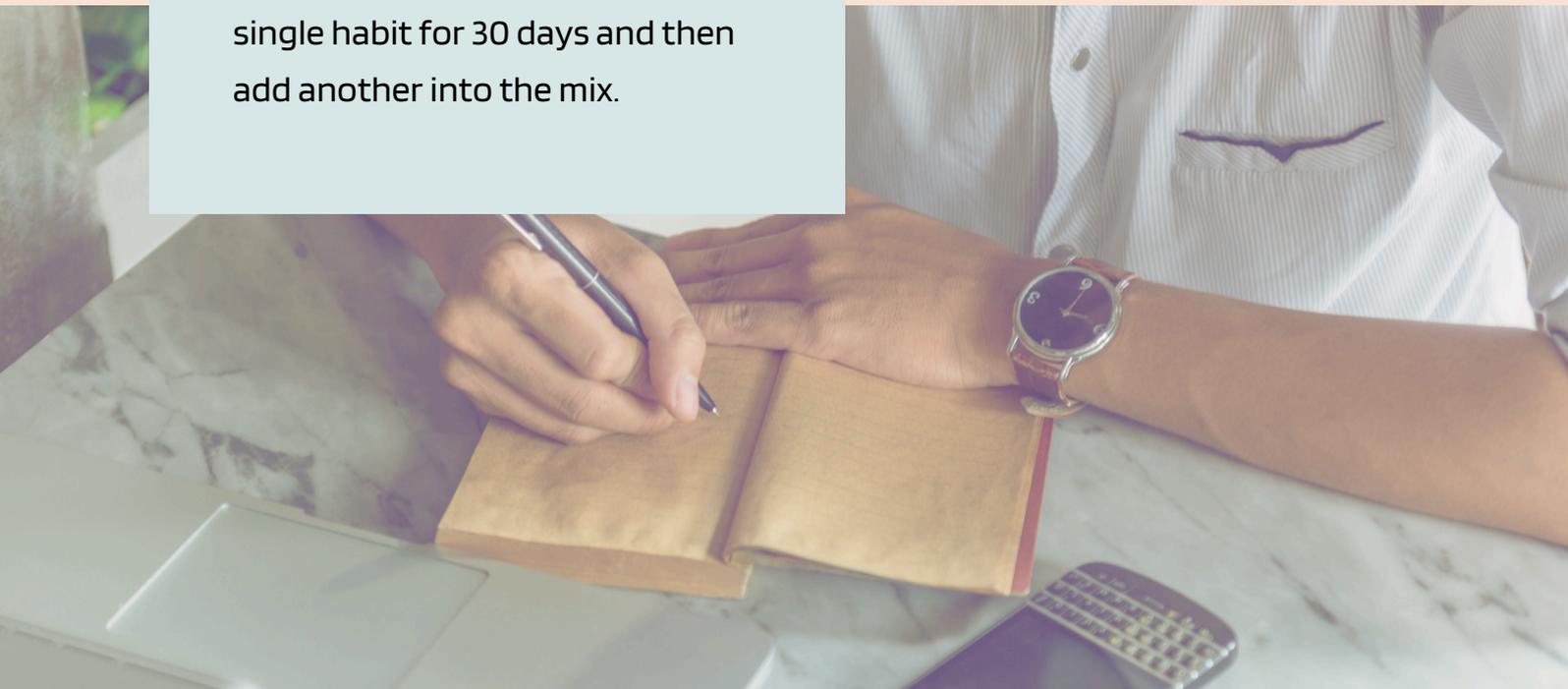
Your body does not need to be stressed out more with too many changes right now. Focus on a single habit for 30 days and then add another into the mix.

## *Quick definition:*

The sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and parasympathetic nervous system (PSNS) are two divisions of the autonomic nervous system, and they have opposite roles.

SNS: carries signals that trigger alertness in your body's systems

PSNS: carries signals that relax those same systems

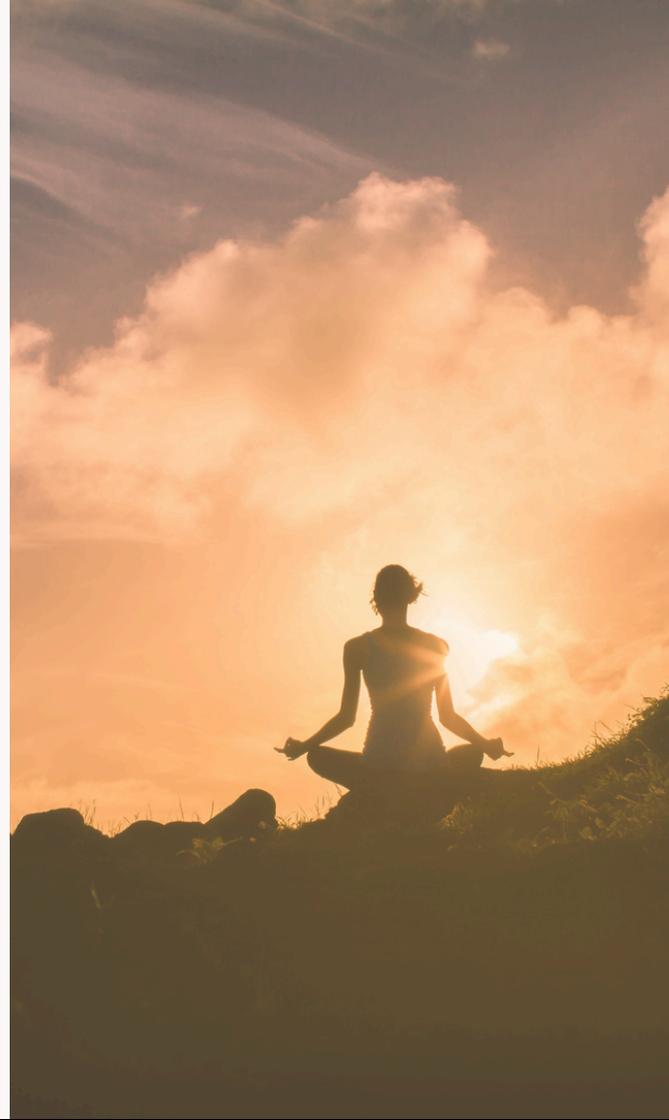


# PRESS PAUSE

Pause for 1-3 minutes between activities. Going right from a workout into eating lunch into a meeting without giving your body some time to rest and recover keeps your body stuck in a stressed out state.

You need to PAUSE and breathe to activate your parasympathetic nervous system so your sympathetic nervous system doesn't stay active while you do things all day.

Here's an example: lie on your back and breathe deeply for 1-minute after completing a workout.



# DEEP BREATHING

I want you to take THREE deep breaths before either: every phone call and virtual meeting OR every meal you eat.

Place one hand on your stomach as you take these deep breaths. Feel your stomach expand with each inhale and collapse with each exhale.

This takes 30-seconds, so you have time.



## FRESH AIR

Within the first hour of waking up, go outside. I don't care if it's for 10-seconds only or if you go for a long walk.

Just get outside before you officially start your day.

**BONUS:** Once you've nailed that for a month, aim for 30-minutes of fresh air the next month. It doesn't have to be 30-minutes straight, just get a cumulative half hour each day.

## SLEEP ROUTINE

Create a nighttime routine.  
Yes, exactly as you would for a toddler.

You want to have a set routine that signals to your brain that it's time to transition into sleep.

You could drink a cup of chamomile tea, brush your teeth, put on lotion, listen to a specific wind-down song, journal, or do some light stretching.

Just pick 1-2 things and do them consistently before getting into bed.



# *More easy habits:*

## Start Journaling

You don't need to write for 30-minutes a day, but jot down a few quick thoughts before bed.

## Meditate

Meditation is just being mindful for as little as 60-seconds at a time. You can meditate while listening to a song, going for a walk or simply turning off your brain to breath for a moment.

## Fix Your Posture

Straighten up your posture anytime your phone alerts you of a text or notification.

## Drink Water

Start each day by drinking a glass of water.

## Lower Alcohol Intake

I'm not saying to stop drinking, just reduce it slightly.

## Limit Caffeine

Drink one less cup a day than what you currently consume.

## Eat A Balanced Diet

Aim to lower your saturated fats and increase fiber intake.

## Look Into Supplements

Start taking an Omega-3 supplement or Vitamin D.

**Remember: Your goal is to focus on ONE HABIT each month. Then, don't lose the habit after that month, just add on to it with another habit of your choosing from this list!**



# *Exercising for cortisol control*

If your body is producing too much cortisol, you are likely also struggling to lose weight. And what do we do when we want to lose weight? We exercise more and push ourselves harder in our workouts.

That is not the correct solution for a body that is high in cortisol though! In fact, exercising more and pushing yourself to an extreme will cause your stressed out body to produce more cortisol and as a result, you will gain more weight.

So what you think is helping you burn fat is actually causing you to store more fat!

We need to flip the script and change how you view exercise if you want it to transform your body and lower your cortisol.



Your motto for exercise on your cortisol journey is "less is more".

You are going to focus on shorter workouts, fewer workouts, and a routine that, instead of pushing you to an extreme, takes a moderate intensity approach to movement.

On the next page, you are going to see a break down of the do's and don'ts of exercising to lower your cortisol levels.

If you currently do not exercise consistently, you are going to start working out 1-2 days a week using those rules.

If you have a routine already, tweak it using the listed rules for the next few months and see how your body responds!



*More is not  
better, more is  
just more*



# DO

Low to moderate intensity workouts

Shorter workouts, aim for 10-30 minutes max

Workouts that allow you to speak in full sentences

Routine includes strength, stretching and light cardio

Intentional breathing - Inhale as you extend and exhale as you contract

Stay focused during the whole workout

Take at least 2 rest days a week

Stretch and give yourself 1-3 minutes to rest before getting back to your day

# DON'T

High intensity workouts (like traditional HIIT)

Workouts that are longer than 45-minutes

Workouts that leave you so winded you cannot speak

Cardio and endurance based routine

Hold your breath during your workout or huff and puff the whole time

Allow outside thoughts to distract you as you move

Skip rest days

Skip your cooldown to get right back into your work or chores

# *To clarify:*

You do not need to avoid the things in the “don't” column forever, you just need to stop doing them as you work on lowering your cortisol levels. Once you've got your cortisol under control, you can gradually include the things you enjoy in the “don't” column again... with the exception of the last four things in the don't column - do not do those things ever.



One **final note** about exercise and cortisol. You will know that you're doing the right workouts if you feel energized after completing them. If you feel completely exhausted, anxious or need a nap after finishing your routine, it's not benefiting your cortisol levels. Your body will tell you if it enjoyed the workout or not, you just have to listen!

# Resources

Do you want help **implementing everything** you've learned in the Conquer Your Cortisol e-book?

You can absolutely do this on your own... but these resources will save you time, remove the trial and error, and give you the accountability and support to make it happen — because sometimes you just need a little structure to stay consistent.



## *SCHEDULE A CALL*

Book a FREE 20-minute strategy session to discuss how to tailor the advice in this e-book to match your needs.

[BOOK YOUR CALL](#)

## *START YOUR RESET*

A two-week plan to help you lower cortisol, regulate your nervous system, and build the foundational habits your body needs to feel safe letting go of excess fat. You'll get daily guidance, quick hormone-balancing workouts, and simple stress-reduction practices to start seeing results fast.



[JOIN THE RESET](#)