

# Nature's Field

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An Electronic Journal for NSP Distributors

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## Hoodia *Hoodia gordonii*

By Steven H. Horne

It's interesting to watch herbal "fads" come and go. With a little research and a bit of marketing hype, numerous herbs hit the market and become the rage for a while—such as aloe vera, noni, St. John's wort, ginkgo, mangosteen—just to name a few. Fortunately, they eventually settle into a respectable place in our materia medica. It's not bad that these plants get recognized; it's just sad that the thousands of other useful plants nature offers us get overlooked.

The latest herbal fad appears to be hoodia, a plant from South Africa. Scientifically known as *Hoodia gordonii*, this cactus-like succulent is one of about twenty species of Hoodia plants, but is the only species that has been demonstrated to contain an appetite suppressant.

Because of its ability to suppress appetite, and the current problems in America with obesity, hoodia has received a lot of publicity as an aid to weight loss. It has been featured on 60-Minutes, ABC, NBC Today, BBC, CNN, Oprah's "O" Magazine and elsewhere with positive reviews. This has placed a high demand on this relatively rare botanical.

The plant was originally used by the bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, who have been eating it for thousands of years. When hunting, they consume part of the hoodia stem to ward off hunger and thirst. Hoodia is also used as a medicine for severe abdominal cramps, hemorrhoids, tuberculosis, indigestion, hypertension and diabetes.

The excitement centers on research which demonstrates that a specific compound in hoodia, P57, is 10,000 more active than glucose in going into your brain and making you feel full. It tricks the brain into shutting off your appetite and appears to do so without any side effects.

The initial research was done at South Africa's national laboratory, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Research showed that lab animals lost weight after taking hoodia. The animals typically consumed 30-50 percent less food when hoodia was included in their diets.

P57, a steroidal glycoside, was isolated and identified as the "active constituent." Later, a British company named Phytopharm started working with the CSIR and spent about \$20 million dollars researching P57.

One of the studies Phytopharm conducted was one of those "gold-standard" double-blind, placebo controlled clinical trials. A group of overweight, but otherwise healthy people, were split into two groups—one receiving the hoodia extract and the other the placebo. No other changes were made to their diet or exercise patterns. The hoodia group significantly reduced their caloric intake and lost body fat with no side effects. On average, the hoodia group ate 1,000 calories less per day than the control group.

In another animal study done by Brown University Medical School in 2004, special rats were used that have been bred to be both obese and diabetic. Not only did these rats lose weight on hoodia, it helped reverse diabetes in some.

P57 would probably be sold as a drug, except that it proved to be both difficult, and expensive, to synthesize. Furthermore, because supplies of the plant were limited, it would be difficult to extract enough to meet the demand.

So, Phytopharm took out a use patent on hoodia. A use patent means that no one else can market hoodia as a weight loss product. But, here's the problem. It doesn't mean that nobody else can sell hoodia (if they obtain it). After spending \$20 million in research to prove the stuff works, other companies use their research and the name "hoodia" to capitalize on media attention. Many of these products contain little or no actual hoodia.

One can readily see why relatively little research is done on medicinal plants—it's difficult to recoup the investment.

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Companies that do research on plants are typically looking for “active” compounds that can be patented and sold as drugs, not whole herbs.

The whole thing calls to mind the publicity St. John’s wort received a few years back. I had quite a few people come to my shop looking for St. John’s wort. In many cases, I thought there were herbs or formulas that would be better choices for their unique needs, but they had more confidence in a 15 minute TV segment than they did in an herbalist with nearly 20 years experience. Oh, well.

Obviously, hoodia has benefits. Since it’s such a scarce herb, NSP has wisely opted to capitalize on the “hoodia hype” with Nature’s Hoodia formula. The blend contains a little hoodia along with some other herbs and nutrients known to help curb appetite and boost metabolism. So, the formula gives you a synergistic effect.

Yes, just like there are many herbs for depression besides St. John’s wort, so there are many herbs that can help curb excess appetite. Here are a few—alfalfa, spirulina, bee pollen, garcinia, *Caralluma fimbriata* and licorice root. Formulas like Garcinia Combination, Super Algae and Target Endurance are all good choices to help curb excess appetite. Finally, humble fiber products, such as Psyllium Hulls Combination, Nature’s Three or Fat Grabbers, will also provide a feeling of fullness, reducing appetite. Fiber also cleanses the body, reduces the glycemic load, protects the colon, prevents gallstones and acts as a laxative.

Not to take away from the value of hoodia, but the whole hype thing brings up several problems with our modern American herb industry. First, the media hype gets people to focus on the idea that there are “special” plants that have almost “magical” properties, at the same time overlooking the fact that there are numerous valuable medicinal plants out there.

It also causes a kind of “tunnel” vision about herbs—St. John’s wort is for depression, saw palmetto for prostate problems, ginkgo for memory loss. The result is a loss of the “richness” of our herbal traditions. (For example, I just attended a workshop at the AHG convention in Boulder, Colorado with David Winston where he talked about all the different types of depression and over 20 herbal remedies for depression.)

There is also the issue of sustainability. To sustain the demand for hoodia, plantations are being started which will take years to mature. Meanwhile, what will happen to wild populations? I hope that wild populations of hoodia won’t

suffer the same fate that wild populations of herbs like ginseng, goldenseal and echinacea have. We’ve decimated the populations of these plants in many areas.

And finally, what about indigenous people—who are the source of much of our herbal knowledge? The African Bushmen who have used this plant for food are “cut out of the loop” because they aren’t getting any benefit from the commercialization of hoodia. These native people supply the traditional knowledge that makes us aware of plants like hoodia, but they receive no financial benefit for their contributions. Meanwhile, the plant knowledge of traditional people all over the world is dying off, as people have lost interest in the abundant sources of medicine growing in their own area of the world.

Please don’t misinterpret what I’m saying here. I think it’s great that we have formulas like Nature’s Hoodia and other products that can help people lose weight. It’s just that I wish we could get as much enthusiasm generated over herbs in general as we do over the latest herbal fad.

Besides, unless any weight loss product is used in conjunction with helping a person develop better health habits, the results will be temporary at best. Americans, in general, are addicted to the “quick fix,” but when it comes to matters of health, all quick fixes do is band-aid the problem without addressing the cause, and in the long run, this never produces the results we really desire.

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# Developing a Healthier Relationship with Food

by Steven H. Horne, RH (AHG)

Have you ever been overweight? Odds are pretty good that you are right now. I am and so is about 70% of the American population. I don't consider myself seriously overweight, and I'm doing better than I was a couple of years ago, but I'd still like to lose some more weight.

I haven't always had these extra pounds of body fat. At one time, I was actually underweight (yes, it is possible to be too skinny—which isn't healthy either). At times I've gained a few pounds, but then, it always seemed to come off on its own without me having to think about it much. This is the first time that didn't happen and I've had to consciously figure out how to take the pounds off.

I'm going to be very blunt here, because from what I've observed in myself and others, weight is about 50% emotional and 50% physical. One thing that's very clear to me is that when I'm happy and not feeling stressed, I always lose weight. When I'm unhappy and feeling stressed, I always gain weight. Part of this is that when I'm happy and feeling good, I'm more physically active and I eat less compulsively.

That's why I don't believe the "diet and exercise" mantra. I've been close to several people who have very serious weight problems and these people often eat *less* than I do and still don't lose weight. I've also observed that trying to make yourself eat less, puts you in a constant battle of willpower trying to deny your cravings and appetite. When you pit mind against body, the body just about always wins. This is amply evidenced by the fact that 90% of all people who lose weight by dieting and exercising gain back all the weight they lost (and sometimes even more than they lost).

So, what is really going on here?

No one in their right mind can deny that when you consume more food than your body burns for energy

that the body will store the excess energy as fat. That's an obvious fact. And, no one can also deny that if you increase energy consumption (activity), while decreasing food intake that the body can burn stored fat, will cause you to lose weight. (Starve yourself long enough and you'll get downright skinny.)

However, the big question is, "Why are we eating too much food?" It isn't natural. The feedback from the body should tell us when we've eaten enough food and shut down our appetite. How come this isn't happening?

For instance, consider thirst. When there isn't enough water in the system, it trips a thirst mechanism, which causes you to seek out water. The volume of water in the blood trips the thirst mechanism on, but if you had to wait until the blood level of water normalized before thirst tripped off, you'd drink too much water, because of the time it takes for water to be absorbed into the bloodstream. So, the thirst mechanism is turned off by swallowing, and the body can gauge within a few ounces whether you've swallowed the right amount of water to properly rehydrate the blood.

Why shouldn't our appetite mechanism be just as sensitive? I believe it is. The body knows how many "calories" of energy it needs and what nutrients it lacks and can adjust our sense of taste, smell and appetite to regulate our food consumption accordingly. Try this as an experiment some time. Get some apples and start eating them. Try to force yourself to eat too many apples. I bet you won't be able to do it. You'll get to the point where your body will rebel to the point you won't be able to gag down another bite of apple. Don't believe me? Try it, then you'll know what I'm talking about.

So, the fact that we're eating more calories than we need shows there is some kind of breakdown in the com-

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munication system between the mind and the body. If we can fix this communication breakdown, we'll not only lose weight easily and naturally but keep it off too. It won't require willpower because we won't be trying to control the body via our conscious mind. Instead, it will be easy to do because mind and body will be in harmony.

So, how do we fix this communication breakdown? I believe that there are two primary reasons for this lack of mind-body communication. The first is what we are eating and the second is how happy we are (which includes how we eat what we eat).

## Nutritional Density and Empty Calories

It is very clear to anyone who looks closely at the situation that refined and processed foods are the number one reason for the increase in serious weight problems in our culture. The reason that refined and processed foods contribute to weight gain is that the body doesn't just need calories. It also needs vitamins, minerals, enzymes and numerous phytochemicals whose nutritional value has yet to be established. All of these nutrients (both recognized and unrecognized) are present in whole, natural foods.

Most diet programs and books focus only on calories or the source of those calories. Calories come from fats, proteins and carbohydrates. Most diets focus on trying to modify caloric intake and/or to adjust the source of those calories (i.e., low fat, low carb, high protein, low glycemic, etc.) The assumption is that all we need to do is adjust the caloric intake and the rest of what the body needs will automatically be present in the diet. I don't believe this is accurate.

It is no secret that my favorite research on nutrition was conducted by Dr. Weston Price, a dentist who toured the world in the 1930's studying traditional diets and the health of traditional people. Dr. Price found that traditional people seldom got sick, had excellent bones and teeth and tended to be socially well adjusted. In testing their food, he found that it was more nutritionally dense than the food being consumed by their "civilized" counterparts. For example, he found that traditional diets contained four times more water soluble vitamins and ten times more fat soluble vitamins than the foods most Americans were eating at that time.

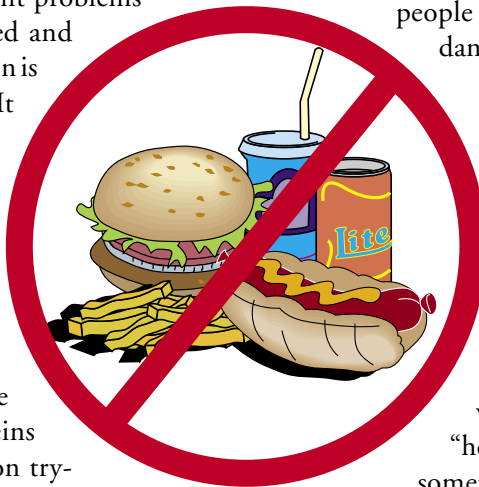
If our diets were that deficient, compared to traditional diets, in the 1930s, think how much worse the situation is today. The bottom line is that our commercial sources of food, even natural foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, are generally lacking in vitamins, minerals and other phytonutrients. This is largely due to modern agricultural practices which are not taking proper care of the soil.

This is bad enough, but when we take already nutritionally depleted foods and then refine and process them, we further deplete vitamin and mineral content. The result is an even lower nutritional density. Refined flour, white rice, processed oils, refined sugars, canned goods, packaged foods, etc. have all been stripped of their complex nutritive value, making them "empty calorie" foods. Modern food manufacturers like these processed "foods" because they can be stored almost indefinitely. So, they fight to keep people from recognizing the truth about the dangers of these foods to our health.

Armed with this knowledge, those of us "in the know" go looking for better food. Knowing that "organically-grown" food is likely to have more nutritional density, we buy organic. But, even in the "health food store," we encounter some "empty calorie" foods. A lot of the bread is made with "organic, unbleached white flour" and we find "organic refined sugar" in many "health foods," too. If you're going to grow something organically (and therefore try to increase its nutritional value) why would you want to refine it and strip its nutritional value away?

## The Challenge of Finding Quality Food

So, finding good quality food can be a challenge in modern society. As a result, the body isn't getting all the nutrients it needs in the foods we eat, so our appetite isn't satisfied even though we've consumed enough calories for energy. For example, one might eat four slices of white sandwich bread (even if it is unbleached and organic) and still feel unsatisfied, while one slice of a dense, whole grain bread might leave one feeling full. The calorie content of a slice of whole grain bread is about the same as that of a slice of white bread, but the fiber, minerals and other nutrients in the whole grains make them more filling.



They also lower the glycemic load of the food (that is, how much insulin production it triggers).

This is why I can't understand why most of the diet books and programs completely ignore the issue of food quality. If you lower your caloric intake of empty calorie foods, you're only going to make that nutrient depletion worse, leaving you even hungrier than you were before. No wonder people can't lose weight. The 1.5 trillion dollar processed food industry has gotten the majority of Americans so "duped" that they can't see that they're all addicted to junk food.

Unfortunately, taking a vitamin/mineral supplement will only partially help, because 1) we don't know everything in food the body needs and 2) many of the vitamins and minerals in the supplements aren't that natural. (Sorry to disappoint you, but it's true!) So, the only real solution to the problem is that we're going to have to start looking for better food.

Now, I've been looking for quality food most of my life, but I'm still overweight. Why? Well, that gets us into the second major problem we have that prevents us from losing weight—we're stressed and unhappy.

I've noticed that when I'm home for a period of 3-4 months, staying organized, eating my own home-cooked, high quality food, I always start losing weight. As soon as I start traveling, I start gaining weight again.\* Of course, part of this is the fact that I don't get quite the same quality of food I do when I'm home, but, there's an even more important reason.

Traveling is stressful for me. I'm really more of a "homebody" kind of guy, and I do best with routines and quiet. The disrupted eating and sleeping schedules and the other pressures I experience when I travel cause me to change not just what I eat, but how I eat it; and how you eat is nearly as important as what you eat when it comes to weight.

### A Sure-Fire Approach to Getting Fat

There's a sure-fire way of eating that will virtually guarantee you'll gain weight, even if you're eating nutri-

tionally-dense food. It's been my standard eating pattern. Is it yours?

Here are the rules to follow if you want to gain weight:

1. Skip breakfast.
2. Don't stop and eat when you get hungry; keep rushing around and pushing yourself to get things done.
3. When you do eat, eat quickly so you can get back to all the things you need to get done.
4. When you do get something to eat, eat it while you're working, driving or trying to get something else done.
5. Come home really hungry after a hard day's work where you haven't eaten regularly throughout the day, then eat a big meal late at night and/or plenty of snacks before bedtime.

I learned this from a "Hollywood" nutritionist, who uses this program for actors who need to gain weight for certain movie roles.

This program helps you gain weight for the same reason that dieting doesn't help you lose weight—it sends your body into feast or famine cycles. Because you don't take time to eat regularly, you get "starved" so your appetite becomes excessive. Then, you eat more than you need and your body "stores" the excess to cover for the next time you don't eat. Constant repetitions of this cycle cause you to slowly, but surely, gain weight.

### Eating Should be Pleasurable

This pattern of eating not only puts you on a blood sugar roller coaster; it also shows you're too stressed and probably not very happy. When you're experiencing happiness (or pleasure) in your life, your body sends chemical messages that lower your appetite, increase your metabolism, enhance your immune system and make you



\*Which is why I've made a decision to restructure my business and minimize my travel. It doesn't make sense for me to ruin my own health traveling around the country trying to help other people get healthy.





feel good. Conversely, when you're feeling stressed, the chemical messengers that flood your body increase your appetite (especially for sugar and simple carbohydrates), decrease your metabolism, reduce immune function and make you feel "bad."

In last month's Nature's Field, I referred to a program called *The Pleasure Principle* by Dr. Paul Pearsall, Ph.D. Finding pleasure in one's life is important to losing weight. Dr. Pearsall also says that the positive effects of a pleasurable experience on the body dramatically outweigh the negative effects of stress. So, instead of seeking to avoid stress, we should deliberately seek to create pleasurable experiences. This is completely opposite to what most people who are experiencing weight problems do. Because they're unhappy with themselves, they seek to starve and deprive themselves, or exercise to "punish" themselves.

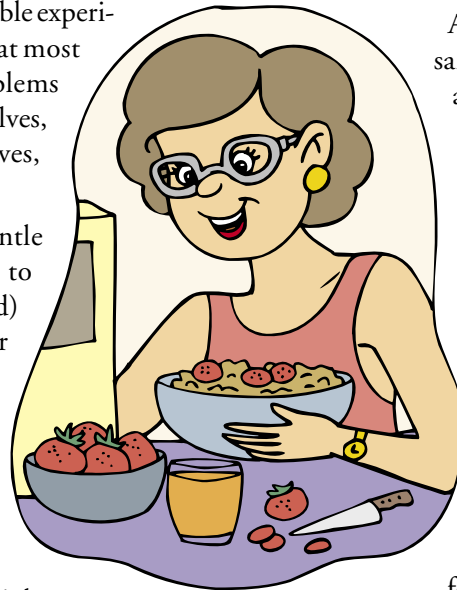
Instead, they need to learn to be gentle and loving with themselves and seek to indulge in experiences (other than food) which create joy and pleasure in their lives. Pleasurable experiences send a cascade of chemical messages through our body that increase metabolism, improve mood, reduce stress, enhance immunity and otherwise improve body function.

The eating pattern for gaining weight that we just shared is the typical eating pattern of the American work-a-holic, constantly being driven to "get ahead." In American culture, pleasure and joy are linked in people's minds to money and success, which are always "in the future." This is a lie. Pleasure and joy are in the here and now and are found by enjoying what is happening right now. But, taking time to enjoy what I'm doing in the here and now isn't part of the American way of life, and that's the whole reason Americans are drawn to "fast" food in the first place. We're in too big of a hurry to take time and "smell the food," let alone enjoy the flowers (or any other pleasant thing).

This notion first dawned on me in 2005 when I read Mireille Guiliano's book, *French Women Don't Get Fat: The Secrets of Eating for Pleasure*. I highly recommend this book because it really changed the way I thought about food. Historically, the French have made eating a very important, pleasurable experience. Not only has food quality

been important, but taking time to really enjoy the meal is part of the traditional French way of life.

In the book, *Ultra Metabolism*, a book about losing weight by improving your health habits (and another volume I highly recommend), the author tells of a client who said he would not give up his hamburgers and fries because he liked them too much. The author told him he didn't have to give them up, but he needed to stop picking them up at the drive-through window and eating them on the run. Instead, he had to go into the restaurant, sit down and take time to enjoy them.



A short time later, the guy came back and said that he's quit eating his hamburgers and fries because they tasted so bad. You see, he was in such a hurry that he was ignoring the subtle messages his body was giving to him about what and how much he should be eating. When we slow down and take the time to enjoy our meals, we "tune in" to the needs of our own body and pretty soon, our body will start telling us what is and isn't good for it. Then, it's no longer a question of "mind over matter," it's a co-operative effort between the mind and the body and becomes easy to maintain, since the pleasure of feeling good is pretty addictive.

## How to Eat to Lose Weight

Earlier this year, I read an article in the newspaper which I wish I had clipped and saved. Fortunately, I remember the gist of it. It was about a professor at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah who was helping people lose weight by getting them to focus on changing *how* they ate instead of *what* or *how much* they ate. This guy was claiming that families where parents were constantly nagging kids about eating issues were more likely to produce adults with serious weight problems than families that allowed children to eat when they were hungry and otherwise control their own food intake. Thus, they learned to ignore the messages from their own body and eat according to the mental programming from their parents.

Here's where the "struggle" of weight loss is. It isn't a "war" between your mind and body with your mind (or will-power) needing to win. In fact, it's exactly the opposite. You need to become aware of the dysfunctional mental

attitudes with which your brain has been programmed and let your body win. Most of us haven't lost our "head," we've lost our body. In other words, we are out of touch with our body and living in our head.

Either verbally, or non-verbally, our parents (and other significant people in our early life) condition our attitudes towards food and eating. My own parents communicated several messages from which I've had a hard time deprogramming myself.

The first, and most difficult one to tackle, has been, "Clean your plate." I was thoroughly conditioned through guilt, reward and threat of punishment to not waste food. I was told that starving children in China would be glad to have that food (guilt). I was told there was no dessert if you didn't finish what was on your plate (punishment). And, finally, food, in the form of cookies and other treats was also a reward for good behavior.

The net result is that I have a lifetime habit of totally ignoring the messages my body sends me that tell me I've had enough to eat. I have to eat what's on my plate because it's a "sin" to waste food. The only thing that has helped me change this is slowing down and taking more time to enjoy what I'm eating. By staying connected with my body, I can feel it is unpleasant to eat beyond the point of satisfaction. This awareness helps me consciously "resist" the guilt conditioning that says I'm letting food "waste." This helps keep food from going to "waist," too.

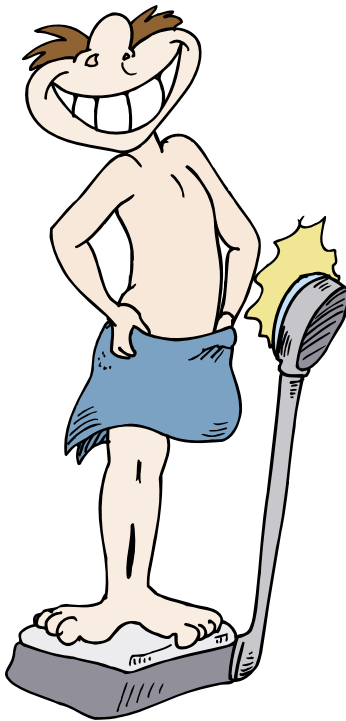
I'm not alone in my compulsion to "clean the plate." Research actually shows that portion size has a big influence on how much people eat. If a meal is served on a smaller plate, people will eat less because the plate holds less. Unfortunately, many restaurants in America service excessively large portions on big plates. So, you really have to get over the conditioning that the amount of food you're supposed to eat is governed by what is on the plate and tune in and let your body tell you how much you really need.

I was also strongly conditioned that work came before play, and that I wasn't allowed to enjoy myself until all my work was finished. While this isn't necessarily a bad idea, it created a tendency that I have to keep pushing myself

because things aren't finished. Because my work is never done (meaning there is always something on my list left to do at the end of every day), I have developed habits of continuing to drive myself and postpone eating or taking a break. This habituates the "famine-feast" cycle that makes me eat too much at night and then skip breakfast the next morning.

Also, the constant internal pressure to get my work done means that when I'm finally so ravenously hungry that I can't ignore the fact that I need to eat, I tend to eat too fast so I can get back to work. This is another reason why I tend to gain weight when I travel. Travel is stressful for me and I tend to eat too fast when I'm feeling stressed.

However, I'm starting to learn that the issue isn't so much that I have stress in my life, it's that I wind up not taking time to have pleasurable experiences that counteract the effects of the stress. I've been having to reprogram myself that my work doesn't have to be "finished" for me to have pleasure and fun in my life. I can deliberately make time for eating, playing, taking a break, getting a massage, etc. even if I've got a lot to do. I'm still trying to get over the guilt I feel when I do this, but I'm getting better at it. When I feed my emotional need for pleasure with different kinds of pleasurable experiences, I'm less inclined to try to "feed my needs" with food.



## Suggestions for Losing Weight

So, here are the basics of how to eat to lose weight, based on my own experience as well as my reading and research.

First, start adding nutritionally dense, whole foods to your diet. Eat them first. Gradually, you'll find you prefer them to refined foods.

Second, always eat something for breakfast. Make sure breakfast includes some protein and quality fats. For example, eggs, avocados, whole milk yogurt (preferably organic), whole grain cereal with organic butter, flax seed oil or cream (but no sugar) would be good choices, but it all depends on what you like and what feels good to you.

Third, eat small, regular meals throughout the day. Take "fast" food with you such as fresh fruits, dried fruits,

nuts, organic cheese or other healthy snacks that you can nibble on when you start to feel a little hungry. In other words, graze a little throughout the day. Stop eating when you just barely don't feel hungry anymore, not when you feel full.

Fourth, for all meals, take time to notice the flavor, texture, color and aroma of what you are eating. Pause and take time to really chew and enjoy whatever you eat. Breathe while you eat. Put down your fork or spoon between bites.

Fifth, if you're going to eat it, enjoy it! Don't ever feel guilty about what you eat. Even if it's not the best food, eat it, be thankful for it, and enjoy it.

In addition, the following non-food related activities will be helpful.

Drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Nourish yourself by giving yourself pleasurable experiences each day (a massage, time with a friend, a relaxing bath or any other activity that gives you a sense of pleasure). Most of us overeat because we're "unhappy" and trying to fill that emotional emptiness with food.

Get a good night's sleep.

Become physically active. You don't have to "exercise" or go to the gym, just go for a walk, ride a bike, play a game like golf or tennis, hike, garden, whatever—as long as it's something you enjoy. (Remember here that the goal is to find pleasure in life.)

Don't "beat yourself up" emotionally over your weight (or anything else for that matter). Don't feel guilty and bad about yourself when you "break" any of the above "suggestions." That's not the point. All of these are suggestions for how to care for your body in a way that will be pleasurable, and healthfully addictive. The goal is to get addicted to having your body feel good. Then, it's no longer a struggle to do what's good for you, it's easy and better yet automatic!

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## The Bottom Line

So, the bottom line question is, why do people "struggle" with weight? What are they struggling with? They're not struggling with some external "enemy," are they? They think they are struggling with their body, but that's not really true. The body is their ally. The body wants to feel good and sends us signals trying to communicate what is making it feel good and what is making it feel bad.

The problem is, we aren't listening.

So, again, when we are "struggling" to lose weight, what are we struggling with? We're struggling with our own habits, emotional issues and dysfunctional conditioning about food.

Struggling with these issues only perpetuates them. Instead, focus on finding pleasure in your life by changing your relationship with food in a positive way. Do this by selecting quality food, eating it slowly and enjoying it and by seeking out pleasurable experiences other than food that will help you feel good and be happy.

Of course, it also helps to address specific nutritional issues that may be throwing the body's biochemistry out of balance and causing the person's internal mechanisms of self-regulation to become dysfunctional. I mention a few of these on the last page of this newsletter.

Remember, all of these things are about caring for yourself. As the title of the course I co-authored with Deanna Hansen last year suggests, "Love Your Body Beautiful." If you need help doing this, consult some of the sources below.

## Additional Resources

*Eat Fat, Lose Fat* by Sally Fallon and Mary Enig.

*Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon

*Ultra-Metabolism* by Mark Hyman

*The Pleasure Prescription* by Paul Pearsall

*Weightier Matters* DVD featuring Steven Horne, Tree of Light Publishing

*Transform Your Health* Booklet, Brochure and CD by Kat James ([www.naturestools.com](http://www.naturestools.com))

*The Truth About Beauty* by Kat James

*Love Your Body Beautiful* by DeAnna Hansen and Steven Horne



Kimberly Balas' Clinician's Corner



# Balancing Hormones

## Gaining Weight on Nature's Cortisol

*I understood from Dr. Keller that if someone gains weight on Natures Cortisol, it is because they have low cortisol. What can people do if they aren't sure whether a person's cortisol is high or low?*

No name

Eleuthero is a good choice because it balances cortisol whether it is high or low. The Cellu-Smooth can also do this. In addition, I have used Female Comfort (even on men) to help balance cortisol.

The ideal thing is to do a saliva test to determine cortisol levels. It is a morning, lunch, afternoon and evening testing to determine the cyclic pattern of cortisol levels. Low cortisol can be just as bad as high.

There is a hormone called leptin released by fat cells that reduces appetite and increases metabolism. However, inflammatory conditions interfere with the action of leptin. Since cortisol helps to control inflammation, low cortisol can also be involved in excess weight problems, not just too much cortisol.

With really low cortisol, the medical people typically use Cortef, which is hydrocortisone. Yucca has some similar actions to hydrocortisone, and Adrenal Support can help people with low cortisol to lose weight.

## Adrenal Support or Nature's Cortisol

*What signs or symptoms do we look for to tell whether we should use Adrenal Support or Natures Cortisol formula? In other words, how do we tell if cortisol is too high or too low? I know we are supposed to use Adrenal Support if the adrenals are tired.*

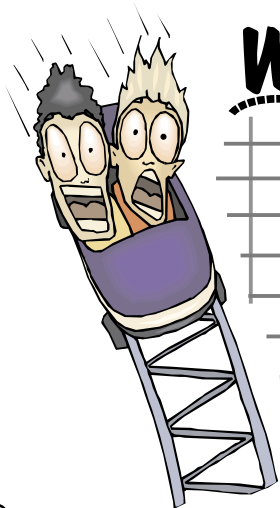
Tonja

I run cortisol tests to determine what is happening. However, you could muscle test both products, too. I just rely on more objective data.

The Activating the Healing Response course from Tree of Light provides some symptoms of adrenal excess and deficiency. Signs of low adrenals include low blood pressure, chronic inflammation, poor memory and concentration, mental confusion, nervousness, irritability, tachycardia and palpitations, low blood sugar and cravings for sweets and carbohydrates.

Symptoms of overactive adrenals include high blood pressure, high blood sugar, poor wound healing, bone loss, reduced immune response, thinning hair and muscle wasting with development of abdominal fat.

For overactive adrenals use the Nature's Cortisol formula and for low to normal adrenals use Adrenal Support.



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## DHEA and TSH High

*Can you give me suggestions for a 57-year-old client, female, with the following blood chemistry numbers:*

*Glucose 105*

*Cholesterol 230*

*TSH 20.861 Range is .350 -5.5*

*WBC esterase 1+ abnormal*

*Bacteria abnormal*

*DHEA 424 Range is 69- 414*

*Cortisol 22.3 8AM The range is 4.3- 22.4*

*The supplements she is currently on are: Chromium, Sugar Reg, Thyroid Support, Nature's Cortisol, Magnesium Complex, Nutri-Calm, Yeast/Fungal Detox, Protease Plus, Pro Pancreas, Adrenal Support and Colloidal Silver for the bacteria. She has been battling infection for some time and urine was cloudy. She also has had diarrhea for a very long time and used to get colonic every week. Now none, but she does use fiber. We have been working on her adrenals for months. Could this be an absorption problem?*

*What would one take with high DHEA level, like this. Will this balance out the thyroid, too?*

*Oh, I have a QFA reading on her, too. Saliva pH 6.2, rH2 21.4, r 157; Urine pH 5.16, rH2 18.6, r 74.*

*Rosie*

This looks like a communication issue with a lack of communication from the adrenal and cells. There is also congestion in the liver

I would use the new Glyco Essentials for sure, along with Adrenal Support. Then, I would get some more iodine into her system along with some Indole 3 Carbyinol to enhance liver detoxification. I wouldn't use the Nature's Cortisol formula because it would shut down her inflammatory responses and the adrenals are already working too hard. I would also look at some SAM-e for the liver. Increasing the good fats in her diet would also help with combustion of hormones.

For the chronic underlying infection, consider something that would work on transport as well as infection, like the Lymph Gland Cleanse. The only reason I wouldn't use the Colloidal Silver here is that the congestive issues showing in her QFA saliva reading suggest that it wouldn't get to the cell as needed.

## Hot Flashes and Anxiety

*I'm working with a 54-year-old female who had hysterectomy 10 years ago. One ovary is still there. She was on hormones until two years ago. She has tried Progesterone Cream and other hormone replacement, but is now experiencing hot flashes and increasing anxiety with light-headedness and dizziness. The doctor wants her on antidepressants, but she wants an alternative. She had blood work done last month. She didn't have a lipid panel, but told me that the last time her cholesterol was checked it was 180. Here are the numbers that were out of balance on her blood work based on percentages of deviation from the mean as calculated as you teach in your blood chemistry class.*

*ALT -94%*

*AST -71%*

*Co2 -66%*

*Protein -60%*

*Creatinine -60%*

*Chlorides +53%*

*Iron -48%*

*Alkaline phosphate -40%*

*Her CBC had 3 toxics showing, with low WBC, platelets and EOS*

*I'm thinking this is liver congestion and starting her on Sam-e, and Super GLA, Not sure what else to do. I was hoping for something to give her some relief from the anxiety attacks. Would Kava be a good idea?*

*John*

I would check her DHEA and cortisol levels. It sounds to me like low cortisol. It would match the liver values shown. Definitely address the adrenals and the thyroid. I would try some Cellu-Smooth or Evening Primrose Oil here. Maybe use some Black Cohosh along with reducing the milligrams of progesterone she's using. It seems it has down regulated her estriol too much.

Kimberly Balas is a board certified naturopath and clinical nutritionist. She is currently head of the research department and a certified instructor for all Tree of Light courses. She is available for consultations by phone or at her Wyoming office. For more information on scheduling a consult please phone 307-277-2466.





## Parting Thoughts from “The Herb Guy”

# Supplements Can Help, Too

We’ve come to the end of this month’s Nature’s Field. It’s longer than usual, but then, I had a lot I wanted to say about this subject. For those of you who are in the supplement business, you may feel disappointed that I haven’t said more about supplements for weight loss. Obviously, that’s because I don’t feel any weight loss program is going to have any permanent benefit unless it addresses the core issues of what and how we eat.

Still, this doesn’t mean that supplements have no place in our weight loss program. There are specific health issues that can interfere with weight loss. Here are some of those issues and some things you can do about them.

### Low Thyroid

The body burns fat in order to stay warm and the gland that sends the chemical messages to burn that fat is the thyroid. Low thyroid is extremely common, especially among women, and can result in weight gain, fatigue, depression, cold hands and feet and dry skin. If low thyroid may be a problem for you, then Thyroid Support, Thyroid Activator, Liquid Dulse or Black Walnut could help you lose weight. In some cases, an iodine supplement like Iodoral or even thyroid medication may be needed.

### Toxicity and Inflammation

Toxins contribute to weight gain in two ways because they cause inflammation and because fat stores toxins. The rapid weight loss most people experience at the beginning of any diet program or cleanse is typically due to a reduction of inflammation and fluid retention. Conversely, when a person gains 5 or 10 pounds after a weekend of bingeing, most of it is fluid retention caused by the irritating food additives and chemicals in junk food. So, a good cleansing program such as Tiao He or Dieter’s Cleanse can also help with weight loss. Fiber supplements like Psyllium Hulls Combination or Fat Grabbers can also be helpful.

### Stress

There is a lot of research showing that stress contributes to weight gain. This is partly because stress promotes the release of cortisol, a hormone from the adrenals. Cortisol is a chemical messenger that causes the body to break down proteins for energy and also causes carbohydrates to be stored as fat (par-

ticularly in the abdominal area). So, stress can cause a decrease in muscle mass and an increase in fat deposition. In this case, supplements like Nature’s Cortisol or Adrenal Support may be helpful. Nature’s Cortisol will help when the adrenals are overactive, Adrenal Support when they are underactive.

### Inflammation

Remember that cortisol is also released in response to chronic inflammation, so a supplement like Thai-Go that has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties can also help to reduce cortisol output. Reducing inflammation also increases metabolism and helps leptin, the fat burning hormone, work better.

### Food Cravings

While adjusting to a better diet, it can help to take some supplements that reduce appetite and food cravings. Here, Nature’s Hoodia or Garcinia Combination may be helpful. Cravings for sugar are signs of blood sugar problems and usually indicate that the diet is lacking fat and protein. Licorice Root and Super Algae are two supplements that can control blood sugar levels and reduce the cravings for sweets. NSP’s new xylitol-sweetened chocolate bars, gum or mints can also satisfy the occasional cravings for sweets without causing the blood sugar spikes that lead to weight gain.

### Enzymes

Digestive enzymes such as Proactazyme Plus or Food Enzymes can also aid weight loss by improving digestive function. Enzyme deficiency contributes to weight gain.

These are just a few examples of the many supplements available that can assist your weight loss program. Our newest herbal hour program, Weightier Matters, contains additional suggestions, as do the books listed under Additional References on page 8.

Steven Horne is a Registered Herbalist (AHG) and past president of the American Herbalists Guild. Founder of Tree of Light Publishing, he is the author of many books, courses, and videos on natural healing. He is available for consults at ABC Herbs in St. George, UT. For more information call 435-627-1682 or go to [www.steven-horne.com](http://www.steven-horne.com).



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