



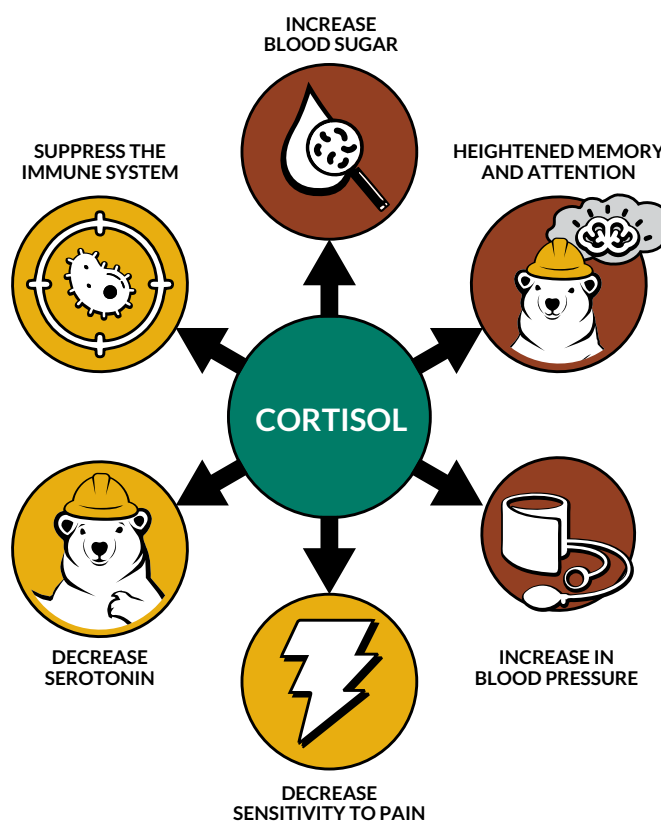
# Cortisol and Toxic Stress

When we experience stress, adrenaline and cortisol surge through our body to make us more alert and powerful to perform at our peak.

Adrenaline is a fast acting response that kicks off the fight or flight response, but cortisol is a more complicated process. Like a slow drip, cortisol down-regulates some body functions that aren't crucial during a threat and can cause the following symptoms:

- Decreased sex drive
- Decreased immune system function
- Accelerated aging process
- Weight gain and stomach problems

The problem is that the brain doesn't always know when we are experiencing a true physical threat and when we are just stewing in anxiety or in anticipation of problems. Thus, managing toxic stress and anxiety is a key to overall health and performance.



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