

SYMPATHETIC DOMINANCE

An Important Hair Analysis Indicator Pattern

Excerpted from an article of the same title by Lawrence Wilson, MD

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Sympathetic dominance or willfulness is one of the most interesting and common patterns that can be identified on a properly performed hair mineral test. It is of great interest because it is a physical, emotional and even a spiritually important human tendency. The latter means that those with this pattern are often of greater than average development of the mind and spirit. This will be important to recall as we describe the meaning of the pattern and how to deal with it.

DEFINITION OF SYMPATHETIC DOMINANCE ON A HAIR ANALYSIS

This pattern is primarily indicated by a **hair potassium level of 4 mg% (or 40 parts per million) or less**. The hair must not be washed at the laboratory for accurate assessment of potassium. This is critical!

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THE MEANING OF SYMPATHETIC DOMINANCE

Sympathetic dominance indicates a person who is over-utilizing his or her sympathetic nervous system. The sodium and potassium readings on a hair tissue mineral analysis, and to some degree their ratio, have to do with the utilization of this branch of the autonomic or automatic nervous system.

While some use of this fight-or-flight system is normal and even needed, when it is overused chronically, it becomes exhausted. The body flips into a parasympathetic state we call slow oxidation. However, if one keeps on using the sympathetic system after exhaustion occurs, the sodium and potassium levels in the hair keep declining, revealing the pattern we are discussing.

In fact, the person is eliminating in the urine and sweat some sodium and potassium beyond what is ideal. This directly gives rise to the low levels. In fact, however, the pattern also has to do with the level of aldosterone in some instances, and it has to do with more complex mechanisms that come into play when the adrenal glands are tired or depleted nutritionally.

SYMPTOMS

People who are in a sympathetic dominant mode of behavior often run around too much physically, and/or they worry and fret (run around in the mind) more than needed. They are expending far more energy than is normal or healthful.

The energy expenditure may be more mental than physical. One may worry about things that “might happen”, rather than be realistic about their life. They may worry that the world will end, for example, rather than relax and enjoy the world that we have.

Other symptoms include a kind of nervous energy. One may feel one has “ants in the pants”.

Another symptom is fatigue upon slowing down. The reason for this is that the body is often in a “second wind” mode of living much of the time. If they relax, they often feel like going to sleep. This is disturbing for them, so they get up and go again, putting themselves back in a sympathetic nervous mode.

Another symptom is an inability to relax. They are less able than some others to just sit and do nothing but relax and smell the flowers. They may feel the need to be “on the go” much of the time. They may have been taught that to sit around is a “waste of time” or “unproductive” or “lazy”.

Often they identify themselves with their ‘doingness’, meaning their activities, physical or mental, rather than identifying with their beingness. The latter would be more like a very young child who is just happy to be himself or herself and need not run around or do much of anything to be happy.

Another symptom is a very active mind. Sympathetic dominant individuals generally have a very active mind to begin with, which gets overactive easily. This can make relaxing, sleeping or just sitting even more difficult.

Another symptom is willfulness. This is a strong self-will. This, of course, is a good thing if it is used wisely. However, the best use of the will for the sympathetic dominant type of person is to will oneself to slow down and relax.... The use of the will for other purposes, such as planning, moving the body, thinking too much and so forth, tends to make the pattern worse and keep it going.

CAUSES FOR SYMPATHETIC DOMINANCE

Causes for this pattern can come from the spiritual, mental or physical realm.

1. Spiritual causes of sympathetic dominance. Sympathetic dominant individuals are usually quite spiritually oriented or advanced, compared to the mass of the people. One wants to “move on”, so to speak, but does not know how to do this without burning out the nervous system in a fight-or-flight reaction.

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Another spiritual aspect of this pattern is that many with sympathetic dominance are somewhat lonely because of their level of mental and spiritual development. They react to this by trying to ‘fit in with the crowd’. To do so, they tend to overwork, overachieve, and generally run themselves ragged. Many try to please others, which is always a mistake. As a result, they exhaust themselves.

Another spiritual aspect is that these individuals are generally quite ungrounded and uncentered. They have a strong need for grounding and centering.... Walking slowly is another excellent way to become centered and grounded, and is highly recommended for this reason. Also, learning to maintain strict boundaries and learning basic truths about the world and about people is also most helpful. ...

2. Mental/emotional causes of sympathetic dominance. This has the most to do with one’s upbringing. Many people are taught not be lazy, to be productive, to not waste time, and so forth. This can become exaggerated into sympathetic dominance. It is a type of compulsive or obsessive quality, we might say.

Another emotional cause may be excessive emotions that are fearful, negative, angry or harmful in some way. For example, fear of poverty, fear of the unknown, fear of self, even, can drive many people to achieve highly or just to keep moving all the time.

Fear. The sympathetic nervous system is the fight-or-flight system. It is the body's response to fear. Anything that creates fear, whether it be listening to the news, watching a horror movie or war movie, being in the company of harmful friends or family, or a thousand other situations can contribute to sympathetic dominance symptoms.

Anger. Many people with sympathetic dominance are quite angry underneath. This is partly because they are spiritually advanced people who are having trouble handling the world. It can also be for all sorts of other reasons, from childhood traumas to karmic patterns that need to be overcome. Dealing with anger, which is often fear that is projected onto others, is important for many people with a sympathetic dominance pattern.

3. Biochemical or nutritional causes of sympathetic dominance. Copper imbalance is always present with this pattern. In fact, a low hair potassium, Dr. Eck found, is always an indicator for hidden copper toxicity.

Other toxic metals, especially mercury and cadmium, or even toxic chemicals in the body may also irritate and drive a person even when he or she wants to relax.

The three amigos are always present as well. These are aluminum, along with a bioavailable form of manganese and iron that are most likely oxides. These also irritate and stimulate the adrenals or the nervous system, perpetuating the pattern.

The metals or chemicals may accumulate because fatigue causes the accumulation of certain toxins to help keep one going.

Also, fatigue also depletes vital nutrients such as zinc, chromium, selenium and others. These vital minerals and some vitamins as well are then often replaced by toxic metals such as cadmium, copper and others.

If one follows a nutritional balancing program, however, the toxic metals and toxic chemicals will slowly be eliminated from the body. As that happens, a person often calms down, worries less, relaxes more and the sympathetic dominance pattern disappears.

Many other toxic and physiological minerals can also contribute to the pattern.

4. Physical causes of sympathetic dominance. An interesting cause of this pattern is **muscle tension** in the body. This may take the form of simple tense muscles or it may cause spinal misalignments and other distortions of the physical body and posture that require handling by chiropractors or osteopaths.

It might also take the form of tight fascia that is addressed by Rolfing or Structural Integration, tight ligaments, bad posture or other structural or physical imbalances.

This is a strictly physical situation for the most part. This also means that anyone with sympathetic dominance should consider physical therapies such as chiropractic and structural integration as part of an overall healing program.

An interesting structural aspect is that a so-called cringing posture will tend to cause this pattern by irritating the sympathetic nerves in the upper and lower spinal area. As the posture changes, the nerves can relax.

SOLUTIONS

The nutritional balancing programs we recommend are geared to correct sympathetic dominance in at least ten different ways, which I will elaborate here:

- *Basic good nutrition.* Those with sympathetic dominance often have poor eating habits, as they are always somewhat on the run. They also are depleted by their pattern. Also, the sympathetic nervous system interferes with their digestion and their elimination, so these areas of their bodies are weakened in most cases. These are specifically addressed with nutritional balancing programs with the right food, good eating habits and the use of supplements such as GB-3 and others.
- *Balancing the oxidation rate.* This helps eliminate toxic metals and restore the autonomic and other parts of the nervous system to optimal functioning.
- *Toxic metals.* We can target the toxic metals that are revealed on the hair analysis for removal. This is done in about sixteen ways simultaneously.
- *Specific nutrients.* We may give specific nutrients to rebuild the brain and nervous system. This, however, is never quite as important as the basic lifestyle changes mentioned above.
- *Supplement program special alterations.* We give fewer stimulating supplements to these people. For example, I substitute Thyro-complex at 2-2-2 for Endo-dren because Thyro-complex is more balanced and not as powerful a product. Also, I reduce Megapan to 1-1-1 instead of 2-2-2 in all cases.
- We give more parasympathetic-oriented supplements. These may include calcium, magnesium, zinc, ox bile, pancreatin or other supplements such as valerian root, for example, if needed for sleep or relaxation for a while.
- *Lifestyle.* We recommend a lot more rest and sleep, going to bed early, and making a concerted effort to slow down your thinking, moving, eating, and all other activities.
- Other lifestyle recommendations include learning to start each day slowly, taking *slow* walks during the day and deep breathing on a regular basis.
- *Dietary suggestions.* Eliminate stimulants such as caffeine and sugar, in particular. Other suggestions are to eat a little more fats and oils than we would otherwise recommend. This helps relax the nervous system and aids digestion, if done correctly.
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- *Other healing modalities.* Also extremely helpful is to use a near infrared sauna each and every morning. This may make one tired, but that is because it is relaxing the autonomic nervous system and is very, very helpful. Just rest after the sauna session. A far infrared sauna or traditional sauna are not as good.
- *Foot reflexology and coffee enemas.* Foot massage is superb to rebalance the acupuncture meridians and relax the nervous system. Coffee enemas bring energy downward in the body and are also particularly needed by people with this pattern. They can be life-saving and usually feel very good. These procedures, along with the sauna sessions, are specifically helpful for this mineral and personality pattern.
- *Chiropractic and Rolfing.* Also consider a program of regular chiropractic manipulation and rolfing or structural integration therapies as well.