



# STRESS MANAGEMENT



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Participants will be able to differentiate between healthy stress and unhealthy amounts of stress.

2

Participants will understand how stress impacts the brain and body.

3

Participants will finish the training with at least two techniques to help manage stress.



“A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances”





# Can stress be healthy?

Positive effects of stress:

- Increase motivation
- Reacting in danger
- Improved cognitive functions from stimulation such as alertness





# When is stress a problem?

Emotional symptoms of stress include:

- Agitation, frustration, and moodiness
- Feeling like you are losing control
- Having difficulty relaxing
- Feeling bad about yourself
- Avoiding others

Physical symptoms of stress include:

- Low energy
- Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Tense muscles
- Chest pain and rapid heartbeat
- Trouble sleeping
- Frequent colds and infections
- Loss of sexual desire and/or ability
- Clenched jaw and grinding teeth



# When is stress a problem?

Cognitive symptoms of stress include:

- Constant worrying
- Racing thoughts
- Forgetfulness and disorganization
- Inability to focus
- Poor judgment
- Being pessimistic

Behavioral symptoms of stress include:

- Changes in appetite
- Procrastinating and avoiding responsibilities
- Increased use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes
- Exhibiting nervous behaviors (nail biting, fidgeting, and pacing)



# Physical impacts of stress

What happens in the brain?

The brain is divided into levels that perform different functions:

- Amygdala (primal part of brain/survival) “smoke alarm”
- Hippocampus (memory and emotions)
- Prefrontal Cortex (thinking and logic)





# Physical impacts of stress

What happens in the brain?

Cortisol and Adrenaline released:

Adrenaline → increases your heart rate, elevates your blood pressure and boosts energy supplies.

Cortisol → curbs functions like immune system responses and suppresses the digestive system, the reproductive system and growth processes.







# Physical impacts of stress

What happens in the body?

## HOW **STRESS** AFFECTS THE BODY

### BRAIN

Difficulty concentrating, anxiety, depression, irritability, mood, mind fog

### CARDIOVASCULAR

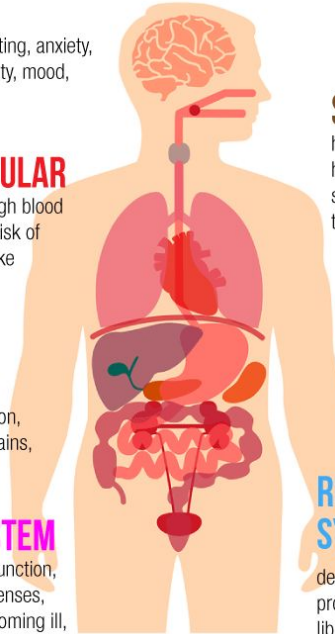
higher cholesterol, high blood pressure, increased risk of heart attack and stroke

### JOINTS AND MUSCLES

increased inflammation, tension, aches and pains, muscle tightness

### IMMUNE SYSTEM

decreased immune function, lowered immune defenses, increased risk of becoming ill, increase in recovery time



### SKIN

hair loss, dull/brittle hair, brittle nails, dry skin, acne, delayed tissue repair

### GUT

nutrient absorption, diarrhea, constipation, indigestion, bloating, pain and discomfort

### REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

decreased hormone production, decrease in libido, increase in PMS symptoms



# Tips to manage stress

How do we use brain science to our advantage?

- Shut off fight or flight response or “smoke detector”
- The way we do that is with relaxation
- The body sends messages to the brain through spine that threat is not present





# Tips to manage stress

In the moment ideas

- Breathing (4-7-8 Breathing)
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Guided Imagery
- Meditation
- Take a walk





# Tips to manage stress

At home ideas

- Listen to music
- Call a friend
- Watch something funny
- Drink tea
- Artwork
- Aromatherapy
- Hug from a loved one





# Tips to manage stress

Ideas to build resilience

- Balance diet
- Prioritize sleep
- Regular exercise
- Engage in hobbies
- Positive self-talk
- Express gratitude





# Tips to manage stress

Ideas for problem solving

- To-do lists
- Social support
- Cut things out that add to stress (when possible)



Let's review:

- When is stress a problem?
  - If it is causing emotional, physical, cognitive, or behavioral symptoms.
  - If it is interfering with your ability to live your normal life style or follow through on typical routines.

Let's review:

- Brain science highlights:
  - Brain has three levels and the two levels of higher function cannot be accessed when stressed.
  - Hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol are released when stressed which is bad for the body long-term.
  - All of these changes in the brain impact different areas of the body such as: cardiovascular system, immune system, digestive system, reproductive system, etc.



Let's review:

- Ways to manage stress:
  - In the moment relaxation techniques
  - At home calm/comfort strategies
  - Resilience building
  - Problem solving

# ACTION STEPS



1

Pick one in the moment stress reduction technique to practice.

2

Pick one resilience technique and prioritize that in your routine.



# Sources

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*Thank You!*



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