

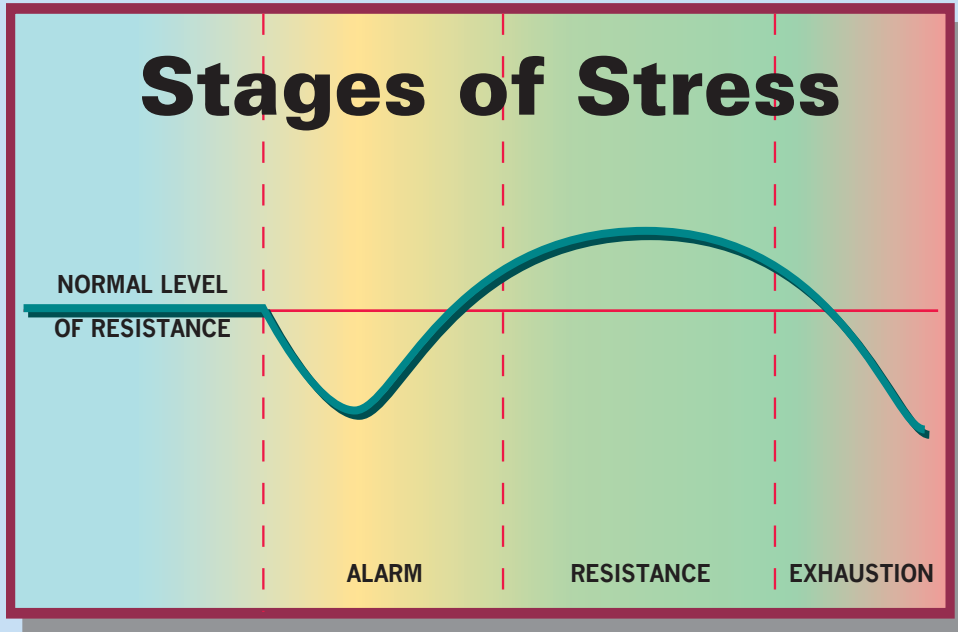


Less Stress!

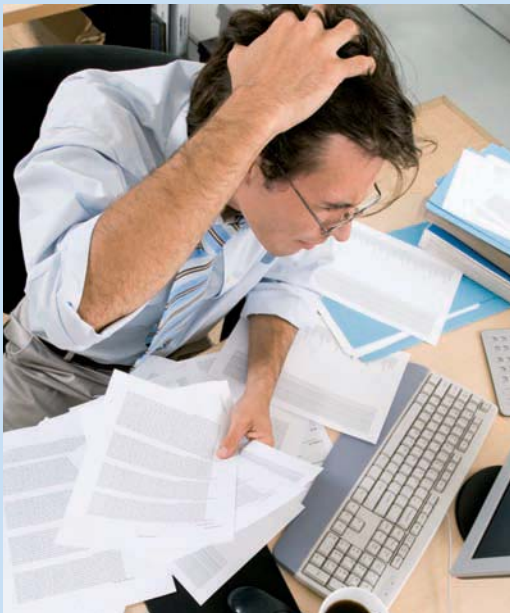
Dr. Julián Melgosa



What is stress?



Although a state of alarm is meant to prepare our bodies for resistance, if it continues for too long, it can actually cause a state of exhaustion. When an engine is tuned too low, it operates at a less-than-optimal level. But if it is tuned too high, it can eventually explode and stop functioning altogether.



We all have our limitations and we must learn to understand them and not to abuse them over long periods of time. This self-analysis is vital if we wish to improve both the length and the quality of our lives.

Stress

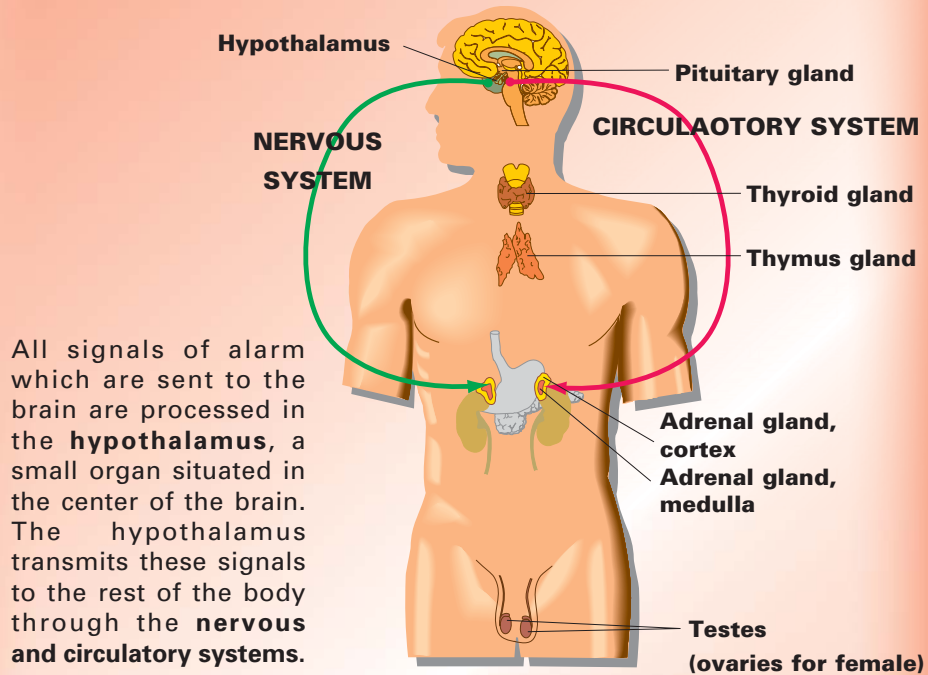
IS

- ✓ the body's reaction to a demand
- ✓ a state of severe physiological and psychological tension
- ✓ preparation for fight or flight
- ✓ the beginning of a number of diseases

IS NOT

- ✓ necessarily bad since, at times, it helps the person reach desired goals
- ✓ anxiety
- ✓ fear
- ✓ the direct cause of disease although it frequently contributes to its development

General Alert Physiology of Stress



Nervous System

The signals produced by the **hypothalamus** are sent to the **sympathetic nervous system** which regulates the organic functions. These stimuli produce alterations in the way that the organs function. These nervous signals also reach the **core** of the **adrenal glands** (the adrenal medulla) producing an increase in the secretion of **adrenaline** and **noradrenaline**. These then pass to the blood and produce changes in the rest of the body.

Circulatory System

The **hypothalamus** stimulates the **pituitary gland**. This secretes various hormones which, once in the bloodstream, affect the entire body. The most important hormone produced by the pituitary gland when stimulated by the hypothalamus, is **adrenocorticotrophin hormone (ACTH or stress hormone)**. ACTH makes the outer layer of the **adrenal glands (the adrenal cortex)** pour out a group of hormones (**cortisol** being the major one) which cause a number of changes in bodily functions. Other hormones secreted by the **pituitary gland** affect the **thyroid gland**, the **testes** and the **ovaries** and have enormous effects on many other organs (see the following page).

Psychosomatic disease

dermatological

hair loss, acne, urticaria, hyperhidrosis, eczema, psoriasis

▪ **endocrinal**
hyperthyroidism, obesity

▪ **muscular**
backache, muscle cramp, rheumatism

▪ **respiratory**
asthma, allergies, rhinitis, bronchitis

▪ **genital and urinary tract**
vaginitis, impotence, premenstrual syndrome, difficulty in passing urine

▪ **nervous**
anxiety, weakness, muscular aches and pains, headaches, tics

▪ **ophthalmological**
conjunctivitis

What happens when there is too much stress?

COGNITIVE AREA (THOUGHTS AND IDEAS)

CHARACTERISTICS

EFFECTS

Concentration and Attention

Difficulty in concentrating on a demanding activity. Frequent loss of attention.

Memory

Short-term and long-term memory decrease.

Response Speed

Problems which need an immediate and spontaneous response are solved in haphazard and unpredictable ways.

Mistakes

Any problem which requires logical thinking tends to be solved with a higher than normal number of errors.

Analysis of Present and Future Situations

The mind is unable to accurately analyze and evaluate present situations or to project them into the future.

Logic and Organization of Thought Processes

The mind is unable to accurately analyze and evaluate present situations or to project them into the future.



Within a couple's relationship there are many situations which can prove stressful. In order for the relationship to succeed, it is important for each partner to learn to control his/her own stress.

EMOTIONAL AREA (FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS)

CHARACTERISTICS

EFFECTS

Nervousness

Difficulty relaxing emotionally and physically.

Hypochondriacal

In addition to normal physical illness, new illnesses are suspected.

Personality Traits

Development of impatience, intolerance, authoritarianism, and the lack of consideration for others.

Ethics

Ethical and moral principles which govern the life relax and there is less self-control.

Depression and Discouragement

Increased discouragement, decreased desire to live.

Self-Esteem

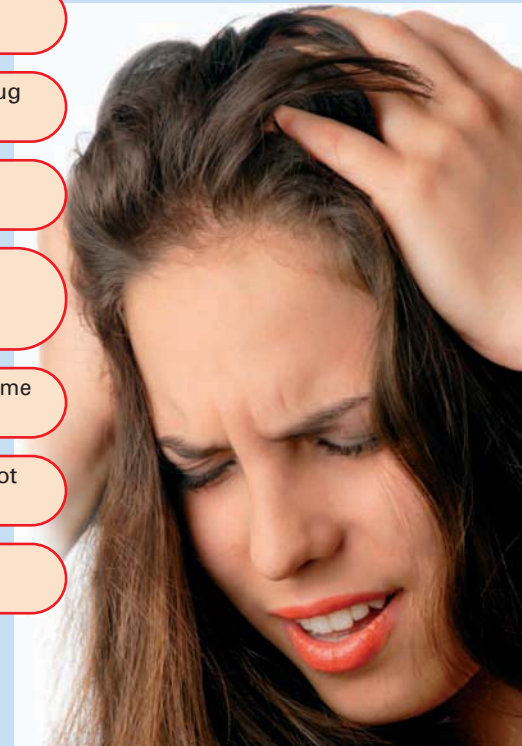
Thoughts of worthlessness and inferiority.

stress EFFECTS

BEHAVIORAL AREAS (ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS)

CHARACTERISTICS	EFFECTS
Language	Inability to verbally address a group of people satisfactorily. Stuttering. Inability to speak fluently.
Interests	Lack of enthusiasm for preferred activities such as hobbies or favorite past-times.
Absences	Absenteeism from work or school.
Stimulants	Increase in consumption of alcohol, tobacco, coffee or drug use.
Energy	Energy levels fluctuate from day to day and tend to be on the low side.
Sleep	Sleep patterns change. Generally, insomnia increases to levels of extreme deprivation.
Relationships	The tendency towards suspicion increases. A tendency to blame others and put the responsibility for mistakes upon others.
Change in Behaviour	The appearance of tics and strange reactions which are not normally a part of the person.
Suicide	Thoughts of suicide increase along with suicide attempts.

Painful and discouraging headaches and migraines are often the result of stress.



Risk Factors of CardioVascular Disease

CONTROLLABLE

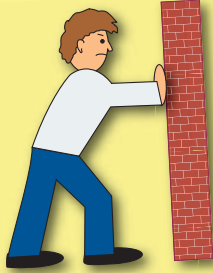
- stress
- high blood pressure (14/9 ou plus)
- alcohol
- tobacco
- high levels of cholesterol
- personality (see p. 65)
- diabetes
- vie sédentaire

UNCONTROLLABLE

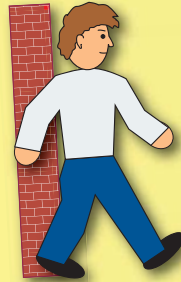
- age (40 years or more)
- gender (male)
- heredity (naturel predisposition)

Cardiovascular disease may be prevented by acting upon the controllable risk factors. These are more numerous than the uncontrollable ones. Stress is one of the major controllable risks and is closely related to the others as we have discussed on this page.

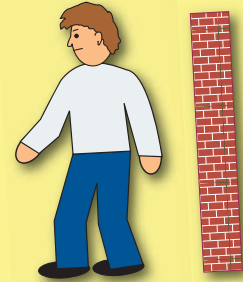
Reactions to Frustration



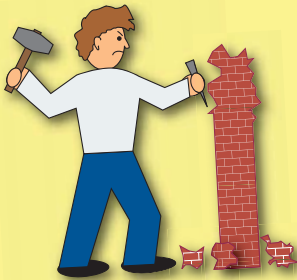
Stubbornness



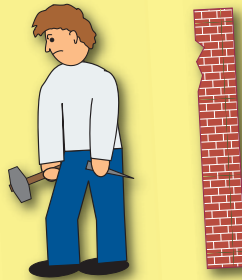
Avoidance



Withdrawal



Violence



Violence without success

When a person is frustrated, he or she may react in different ways, many of which are unproductive. If we wish to remove the frustration, we must patiently analyze the situation and be determined to make the appropriate decisions.

Frustrations

CAUSES OF FRUSTRATIONS

EXTERNAL

Social

Faults in others
Incompatability with others

Physical

Objects which do not work
Mechanical problems

INTERNAL

Personality which is easily frustrated

Individual inability or incompetence

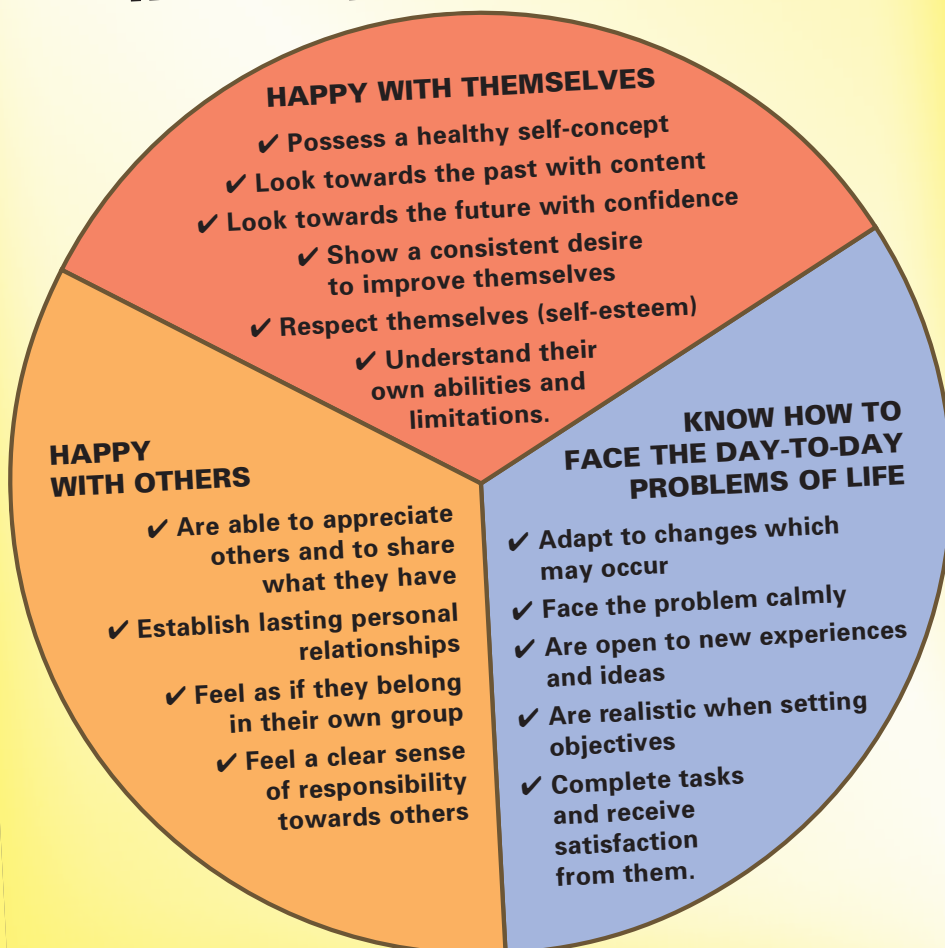
Lack of planning, insufficient effort given



Mental Health

Mental health, like physical health, is not easy to define since the line between health and illness cannot be determined precisely. With this in mind, we can say that the healthy person, from the point of view of mental health, is the one who is reasonably happy with himself, happy with others, and who can face the day-to-day problems of life.

The people who are mentally healthy feel...



How to free oneself from WORRY?

1 Analyze the **significance** of your worry. The majority of worries do not need to exist.

If your worry is **constructive**, review the various **solutions** and choose the most convenient one.

2

3 If it is **destructive**, try to **forget** it by keeping yourself busy or by looking for the company in others.

In any event, **cooperate with the inevitable**. If you cannot do anything to change the situation, accept it and stop waiting over it.

4

5 Don't worry yourself about the **past**. Use the past as a **lesson**, not as an obsession.

If we do not want our own thoughts to cause us stress, we must learn to control them. If we want our internal monologues to be positive, we must learn to practice true meditation. This book can be a useful aid in achieving peace of mind if we practice and apply its teachings.

Causes of Stress

AN EXAMINATION of stress will reveal that, in general, there are two basic sources. First, stress factors can come from external circumstances such as our environment, job, family, or studies.

Second, we can produce our own stress. Our manner of solving problems, our personality, our temperament and our level of self-control can be sources of stress. The degree of physical and mental health which we have influences the amount of stress we have.

Occupations with a high level of Stress



1.º Air traffic controller



2.º Businessman



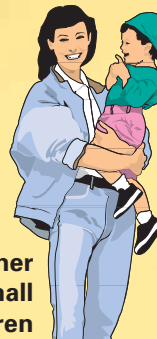
3.º Pilot



4.º Physician



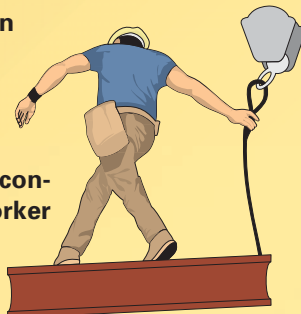
5.º Stock broker



6.º Mother of small children



7.º Elementary or high school teacher



8.º High-rise construction worker



9.º Sales-person

Social relationships are a primary source of stress. But prolonged isolation is also highly stressful. One must maintain a state of balance between the time we spend with family and friends and the time we spend alone and with nature.

The **level of stress** assigned to varying jobs differs according to authors. In this table we have selected some jobs which are regarded as being the most stressful.

There are other jobs, such as **police inspector** or **prison guard** which are

considered as stressful as that of a pilot or physician.

Many other professions also produce high levels of stress. Some examples are **simultaneous translators**, **telephone operators** and **miners**.

Anti-Stress Exercise Program

- **Plan for a fixed amount of time every day** (before or after work). Consider this time as "sacred" and off limits for any sedentary tasks.
- **Choose an activity which you enjoy** and which is compatible with your abilities: aerobics, tennis, cycling, swimming, golf or walking.
- **Find partners.** Exercise in solitude tends to be abandoned.



- **Be enthusiastic.** Think about how much you will enjoy the activity and of the physical and psychological benefits you will receive.
- **Begin moderately,** then increase quality and intensity progressively.
- Keep a record of achievements so you can observe progress without becoming obsessed with it.

SOLUTIONS



In a few days you will begin to observe the results of your anti-stress program.

PRECAUTIONS

- If you are suffering from **illness** or if you are **over 40 years of age** and have **not exercised** regularly, consult your physician.
- Control your **heart rate** (see table on page 163).
- Avoid going directly into **heavy exercise or complete rest** and vice versa.
- Use **appropriate shoes and clothes** for the activity and climate.
- Don't do heavy exercise if you are tired.

Benefits of physical exercise

Moderate and regular physical exercise provide many benefits which help to combat stress

ORGANIC BENEFITS

- Improves the **heart's** efficiency
- Dilates the blood vessels and improves blood **circulation**
- Reduces **cholesterol levels**
- Facilitates the production of **endorphins** with the resulting sense of well being

- Helps to encourage **rest**
- Normalizes **perspiration** and aids in the **elimination of toxic substances**

PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS

- Improves **mental capacity and agility** by improving the blood circulation to the brain
- Increases **self-esteem**
- Improves the **sense of well being**
- Facilitates a **good mood**



exercises the **muscles**
maintains **flexibility**
releases excess accumulated energy, helping to **maintain the ideal weight**
improves the flow of **oxygen** to all cells of the body
helps to control **high blood pressure**



Stressful factors throughout life

BIRTH POSTNATAL STAGE



- Passage from life within the uterus to life in the outside world
- Vulnerability
- Sensorial limitation
- Total dependence upon the adult world

INFANCY up to 2 years of age



- Dependence
- Constant learning: rudiments of linguistic learning, of relationships with parents and family members

PRESCHOOL 2-6 years of age



- Language acquisition
- Establishment of lasting relationships with siblings and other children
- Autonomy:

ELEMENTARY:: SCHOOL AGE 6-12 years of age



- Learning problems
- Development of self-esteem
- Group pressure
- Possible emotional imbalance:

Personality and stress

TYPE A

TYPE B

GENERAL BEHAVIOR

Constant movement

Impatience

Tense facial expression

Roars with laughter

Dissatisfied with position; wants to move up

Competitive at work, games and sports

Complains frequently

Tranquil movement

Calm

Relaxed facial expression

Soft smile

Satisfied with position

Avoid competitive situations

Rarely complains

Stressful factors throughout life

PUBERTY ADOLESCENCE 12-18 years of age



- Problems with study and career choice
- Deep personal changes
- Independence and acquisition of identity

YOUNG ADULT 18-40 years of age



- Beginning of working life
- Completion of higher education
- Intimate relationships with opposite sex: engagement,

ADULT 40-65 years of age



- Completion of professional life
- Problems with adolescent children
- Health problems
- Unemployment
- Old parents

RETIREMENT and after



- Health problems
- Loss of abilities
- Lack of activity
- Death of partner
- Loneliness
- Economic problems:

SPEECH

Quick and loud

With fluctuation and emphasis

Expressive and gesticulating

Immediate response

Gives direct and brief responses

Hurries the speech of others
(nods with repeated gestures)

Interrupts

Slow and soft

Uniform tone

Calm with few gestures

Responds after pausing

Gives extensive answers

Listens attentively

Waits to respond

Stress and personal attitude towards a Potential Stress Factor

Physiological reponses

- hormonal, circulatory or metabolic changes
- accelerated breathing
- tense muscles
- digestive problems
- sleep disturbances
- fatigue
- psychosomatic reactions

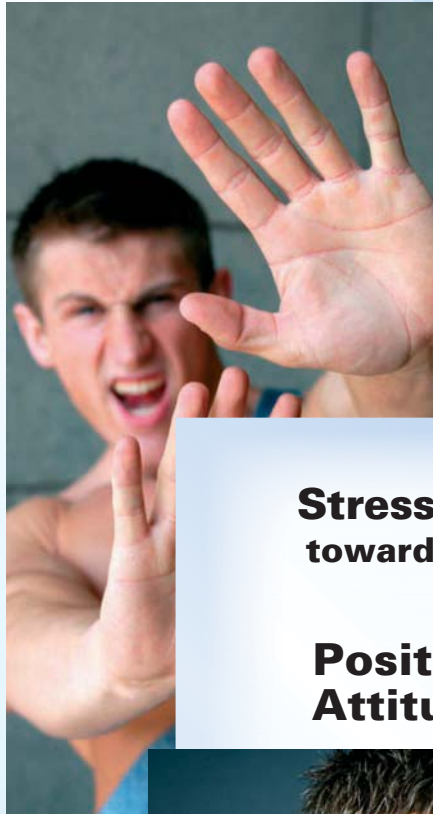
Psychological reponses

- loss of memory and reasoning powers
- anxiety
- irritability
- depression

Faulty behavior

- low production levels
- troubled relations with others
- indecision
- verbal and/or physical aggression
- use of alcohol or other drugs

Negative Attitude



Stress and personal attitude towards a Potential Stress Factor

Positive Attitude

Physiological reponses

- Hormone secretion:
ACTH
cortisone
- More health:
vascular dilatation,
better digestion
better assimilation
better elimination

Psychological reponses

- good mental activity
- self-confidence
- affection and sympathy towards others
- cultivation of unselfishness
- good temperament

Faulty behavior

- optimum production levels
- positive relations with others
- tolerance
- moderation
- self-control

One's attitude towards an event is practically as important as the event itself when it comes to facing it constructively.



Test

Stress and the Diet

An adequate diet contributes to the ability to control and overcome stress. (see the table on page 115, "Choose What Is Healthy".)

What do i lack?

SYMPTOMS

dehydrated skin, mucous membranes sensitive

irritability/depression

fatigue

POSSIBLE DEFICIENCY

vitamins A and C, linoleic acid

glucose, protein, carbohydrates

iron, vitamin B₁₂, iodine

FOOD SOURCES

carrots, spinach, other greens, oranges, strawberries, kiwis, nuts

whole-grain cereals, fruits, vegetables, potatoes

beans, nuts, soybeans, brewer's yeast, sea salt, seaweed, milk products

What do i eat too much of?

SYMPTOMS

tiredness, depression and irritability

lethargy, weakness

nervousness, high blood pressure

lowered mental ability, lack of coordination, depression

irritability, nervousness, cardiac changes

POSSIBLE EXCESSES

refined sugar: cakes, chocolate, ice cream, etc.

saturated fats: meats, butter, matured cheeses

salt

alcoholic beverages

caffeine

REMEDIES

fruit: grapes, plums, raisins, dried figs; honey in moderation

soy products, nonfat milk products

Use in moderation

Water, natural fruit juices

Herbal teas, cereal drinks, malt

Stress Self-Evaluation

Test

How much stress
do i have?

This **stress inventory** measures individual or **personal stress** and is set in the context of a normal and habitual lifestyle which does not include exceptional situations such as a war, a natural catastrophe or an epidemic.

Write down the number which fits your circumstances for each of the **96** items in each category. Then add up the total number for each of the categories: (1) **Lifestyle**, (2) **Environment**, (3) **Symptoms**, (4) **Employment/Occupation**, (5) **Relationships**, (6) **Personality**. Take the

totals from each category and write them down in the corresponding place on page 159. Then complete the questions in this box. **Add up** all the points in the box on page 159. The **total points** will give you an idea of how much stress you are under at this time. **Take this total and find the stress zone on the graph** on page 160 which corresponds to your total. You may draw your own conclusions at this point.

In order for this test to be accurate, you must answer the questions as honestly as possible.

Stress Inventory

1. LIFESTYLE

- I sleep an adequate number of hours for my personal needs
- I eat at regular times
- When I'm nervous I take tranquilizers
- During my free time I watch television or videos
- I exercise regularly
- I eat hurriedly
- I eat as much as I like of the foods which are high in cholesterol (eggs, liver, cheese, ice cream)
- I eat lots of fruits and vegetables
- I drink water throughout the day between meals
- I eat between meals
- I eat a big breakfast
- I eat a small supper
- I smoke
- I drink alcoholic beverages
- In my free time I go outdoors to enjoy nature and pure air
- I have a hobby which relaxes me

Never
Almost never
Frequently
Almost Always

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |



Total LIFESTYLE

Test

Stress
and the Diet

An adequate diet contributes to the ability to control and overcome stress. (see the table on page 115, "Choose What Is Healthy".)

What do i lack?

SYMPTOMS

dehydrated skin, mucous membranes sensitive

irritability/depression

fatigue

POSSIBLE DEFICIENCY

vitamins A and C, linoleic acid

glucose, protein, carbohydrates

iron, vitamin B₁₂, iodine

FOOD SOURCES

carrots, spinach, other greens, oranges, strawberries, kiwis, nuts

whole-grain cereals, fruits, vegetables, potatoes

beans, nuts, soybeans, brewer's yeast, sea salt, seaweed, milk products

What do i eat too much of?

SYMPTOMS

tiredness, depression and irritability

lethargy, weakness

nervousness, high blood pressure

lowered mental ability, lack of coordination, depression

irritability, nervousness, cardiac changes

POSSIBLE EXCESSES

refined sugar: cakes, chocolate, ice cream, etc.

saturated fats: meats, butter, matured cheeses

salt

alcoholic beverages

caffeine

REMEDIES

fruit: grapes, plums, raisins, dried figs; honey in moderation

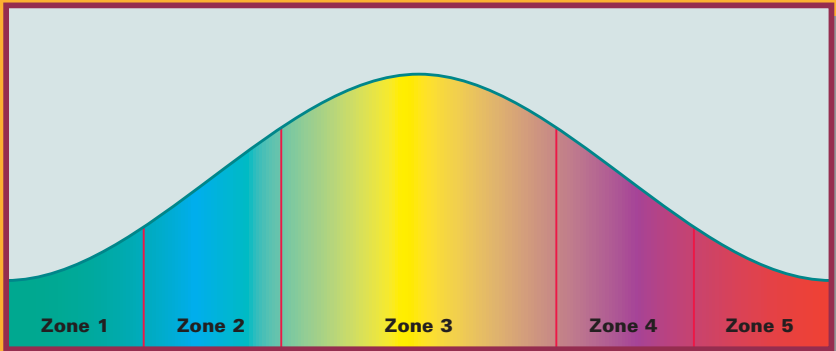
soy products, nonfat milk products

Use in moderation

Water, natural fruit juices

Herbal teas, cereal drinks, malt

Find your stress zone in the graph



Points 48 72 96 120 144

Points scored

- 150 or less:**
NO SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS
- 150-199:**
SLIGHTLY WORRYING
33% chance of becoming ill
- 200-299:**
MODERATILY WORRYING
50% chance of becoming ill
- 300 or more:**
CRISIS POINT
80% chance of becoming ill

The total points referred to above is the accumulation of a complete year.

5

Day Stress Management Plan



This PLAN is our way of attacking the problem of stress at various levels. Because of its wholistic nature, the plan seeks to work daily through each of the human dimensions. The 5-DAY PLAN is all-inclusive and requires that the readers adjust their days carefully if they wish to incorporate all of the plan. Before beginning the plan, please read the advice given on the next two pages. If you wish to follow the PLAN, and if you conscientiously apply the advice given, you may be sure that you will experience better and more lasting results, which will allow you to enjoy a better life.

Thought
for the day

1

**I am the owner
of my behavior!**

Thought
for the day

2

**I am the owner
of my thoughts!**

Thought
for the day

3

**The way others
react depends on
my actions!**

Thought
for the day

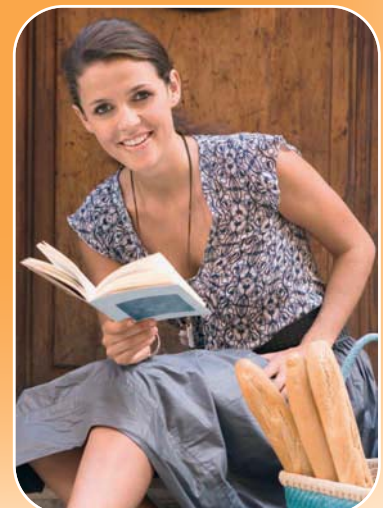
4

**Without stress
I am healthier!**

Thought
for the day

5

**I'm going to look
towards the
future with hope!**





Learn to manage your stress

- A moderate level of tension is necessary to maintain an active and productive life.
- But excess tension causes stress and prevents people from enjoying life.
- Stress is this century's illness; it affects men, women, and even children and adolescents.
- We may not be able to avoid it, but we can certainly learn to manage it and thus avoid anxiety and depression.
- This book offers the best solution to one of the greatest problems of modern life.
- And a unique and practical
5-DAY STRESS MANAGEMENT PLAN.

