

## **Stress.** - STAYING HEALTHY WITH NUTRITION.

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Stress in today's world is mainly a result of continuous high demands that are imposed on us by work, family and lifestyle. In the future, stress may come to be seen as the primary contributing cause of most disease. Research continues to link stress to more and more symptoms and diseases, both acute and chronic. The key is to be able to manage our level of stress.

## Types of Stress

- # **Physical stress:** exercise, hard labor, giving birth.
- # **Chemical stress:** Environmental pollution such as exposure to pesticides and cleaning solvents, and the personal use of chemicals, such as drugs, alcohol and nicotine.
- # **Mental stress:** High responsibility, long hours, perfectionism, anxiety, and worry.
- # **Emotional stress:** Anger, fear, frustration, sadness, betrayal, and bereavement.
- # **Nutritional stress:** Vitamin and mineral deficiencies, protein or fat excesses or deficiencies, and food allergies.
- # **Traumatic stress:** Infection, injury, burns, surgery, and extreme temperatures.
- # **Psycho-spiritual stress:** Relationship, financial, or career pressures; issues of life goals, spiritual alignment, and general state of happiness.

Remember that, stress is not the situation or incident themselves; rather, real stress comes from the way we react to these events or experiences.

Stress has been shown to decrease protective antibodies and reduce the important T lymphocytes that function in the cellular immune system. Chronic stress is clearly a culprit in the generation of aging and degenerative diseases.

## Common Stress Factors

- # Attitude towards self
- # Demands at the office
- # Emotional challenges -personal relationships, fear, anger, loneliness.
- # Family changes- marriage, divorce, separation, a new baby.
- # Health challenges - illness, injury, surgery, chemical exposures.
- # Job and career challenges
- # Life changes - adolescence, aging, pregnancy, menopause
- # Meeting someone new
- # Moving
- # Personal financial state
- # Physical challenges – weather changes, extreme climates, athletic events
- # Promotion, job loss
- # Public speaking
- # Raising children

✚ Test in school

✚ Traffic tickets

✚ War and fear of war

### Stress-Related Symptoms and Diseases

Allergies	Eczema	Muscle tension
Anorexia nervosa	Fatigue	Neck and back pains
Arthritis	Headaches	Nutritional deficiencies
Asthma	High blood pressure	Peptic ulcer
Atherosclerosis	Ingestion	Premenstrual symptoms
Cancer	Infections	Psoriasis
Constipation	Insomnia	Psychological problems
Depression	Irritability	Sexual problems
Diabetes	Irritable bowel	Weight changes

Diarrhea

Loss of appetite

For people with elevated stress levels, suggestions include a variety of stress-reducing activities to minimize the dangers of this underlying cause of disease:

### Stress Preventing Guidelines

- # **Have more fun.** Do things that you enjoy and that help you relax.
- # **Express your feelings.** Emotions need regular venting; unexpected emotions are the building blocks of stress, pain, and illness.
- # **Get good sleep.** Poor sleep or sleep habits do not let your body really rest, discharge tensions and recharge.
- # **Exercise.** Regular physical exercise is one of the best ways to clear your tensions and feel good, with more energy and a better attitude toward life.
- # **Develop good relationships.** It is important to have friends in whom you can confide and find support. Those who love you and accept you and will advise but not judge you are your true friends. It is also very meaningful to be a true friend to another.

✚ **Experience love and satisfying sex.** A primary relationship that is loving, sensual, and sexual can also be a major stress reducer. However, if you do not have this in your life, there are many other therapies that are helpful. These include all bodywork involving massages, as well as movement and dance therapy. Also having a loving pet offers comfort and stress reduction. Often an intense relationship can also be a stressor. It is important to find balance in all you do, in each endeavor and in your life as whole.

✚ **Change attitudes.** When ideas and views are not serving you, it is wise to examine and adapt them. It is important to learn to respond to life's situations and not to react. Hanging onto frustrations, holding grudges, and accepting the victim blame game are not in your best health interests. It serves you to look at the big picture and step out of the little struggles. Find and experience self-love, self-respect, and self-worth.

## **Diet and Stress**

A diet of high nutrient foods is essential for people under stress, because stress increases cellular activity, which leads to increased nutrient usage. Also, less food may be consumed during times of stress, as the digestive tract may be a little upset. Some people who are stressed tend to push

themselves and not take good care of themselves, avoiding meals, especially wholesome ones, and snacking on quick-energy or fast foods.

## **Nutrients and Stress.**

Nutrients that are commonly depleted by stress include the antioxidant vitamins A, E and C, the B vitamins, and the minerals zinc, selenium, calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, sulfur, and molybdenum. Because of increased metabolism and use of energy, the stressed body uses more carbohydrates, proteins, fats, especially the fatty acids. Vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, may indeed be the single most essential anti stress nutrient.