

Understanding Stress



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STRESS CAN BE DEFINED AS THE “WEAR AND TEAR” ON BODY and mind — our physical and psychological response to events that worry, pressure, threaten, thrill, challenge, or scare us. Stress can drain us physically and emotionally and lowers our resistance to illness. However, stress is only as harmful as our reaction to it.

Good Stress/Bad Stress

There are different types of stress: “good,” stress that is exciting and stimulating; and “bad,” stress that is exhausting and draining. Each of us needs to understand the difference between “good” and “bad” stress for ourselves. Only then can we try to keep the good stress while reducing the bad.

Remember, however, that stress helps us survive and it motivates us. Without stress we would stop growing and changing.

Some Common Symptoms of Stress

- Poor concentration
- Head, back, or neck aches
- Pounding heart/keyed up
- Change in eating habits
- Restlessness/sleeplessness
- Anger/hostility
- Irritability
- Sexual disinterest
- Recurring illness
- Excessive fatigue
- Phobias
- Depression

Ineffective Ways of Coping With Stress

- Excessive drinking
- Withdrawing from people
- Excessive smoking
- Avoiding problem situations
- Substance abuse
- Fighting/arguing
- Excessive eating
- Procrastinating

Effective Stress Management Techniques

- Talking things over with a trusted friend or advisor
- Eating healthier and exercising
- Religious/spiritual practice
- Taking time to have fun
- Learning and using time/task management skills
- Learning and using relaxation techniques that work for you , such as deep breathing
- Listening to music with a pulse slower than your heartbeat (72bpm)

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