

The stress reaction



The Stress Reaction Stress is a reality in today's fast paced life. Gone forever are the laid back days when work was left out of the home and mobiles and the Internet did not intrude into the privacy of family life. Pressures at the work place, meeting deadlines, mounting bills and the never ending competition in every sphere of life has taken its toll and people today are more stressed than ever before. The body responds to stress by releasing hormones that increase its ability to counter threat. Constant stress leads to health problems like hypertension, diabetes and heart disease. Stress management is the technique of taking control and easing pressure on one's self. Studies have shown that yoga, meditation, soft music or even pets have been useful in bringing down levels of stress. Stress affects different people differently. It is important to recognize that one's stress levels are on the rise and make conscious efforts to bring them down. The problem sometimes is, that stress creeps on you slowly and it is difficult to recognize it while it takes a heavy toll on your health. Stress is a normal human reaction to perceived danger. The body's fight or flight response kicks in every time the brain perceives a threat and hormones are secreted in the body to ready it to cope with the danger. These hormones provide the extra energy needed to fight off danger. The pressures and situations causing stress are known as stressors. The same stressors that allow greater concentration or focus when facing a challenge in a match or in an exam; can also lead to acute health problems if left unchecked over long periods of time. Hence identifying stressors and managing them has become very important to lead healthy and happy lives. Dr. McEwen and Krahn opine " How a person copes with stress — by reaching for a beer or cigarette as opposed to heading to the gym — also plays a big role in the impact stress will have on our bodies."

(McEwen. and Krahn 2011) Doctors and care givers especially in emergency departments work under stressful conditions where they are required to evaluate the seriousness of a patient's illness and the possibility of his/her condition deteriorating suddenly. The fear of making an irrevocable judgmental error always looms large and adds to other stresses in the doctor's life, like the burden of overwork and long working hours without necessary breaks. Other factors such as patients who are violent or brought into hospitals against their wishes often try a doctor's patience before s/he can establish a rapport with the patient in order for treatment to begin. In such situations doctors themselves need the services and support of colleagues. High levels of such serious stress, can lead not only to serious health problems, but psychological problems as well. There are many ways to counter stress, but the first step is to identify causes for one's stress. This will give direction to managing stress. Once the problem has been identified, then it can be dealt with. Elizabeth Scott who is a wellness coach and health educator remarks " While some stressors are unavoidable, cutting out the stressors that we are able to cut out can help us to have the patience and stamina to deal with the stressors we can't avoid." (Scott Elizabeth, 2011) Problems can be solved through communication, compromise, assertion and adaptation. Communicating with others have often easily solved problems because the person who caused the problem was not aware of causing a problem. Sometimes compromise in certain situations helps ease a build up of stress, while being assertive and facing a problem squarely often leads to a solution, because there are times when we refuse to acknowledge that problems exist. Better time management is another way of resolving stress arising out of hectic schedules. A little thought given to making schedules

and adhering to them can be the key to more effective time management leading to a decline in stress levels. Taking time out to relax is the best technique to manage stress. The benefits of simple pleasures like doing things you enjoy, like going for a walk or playing with your pet, listening to soothing music or gardening are enormous stress busters. Relaxation techniques have proved useful in combating stress. Regularly practising such techniques boost feelings of happiness and serenity. Deep breathing exercises, yoga and meditation have benefited thousands of people and led to better health and increased productivity. Maintaining a healthy life style, exercising, eating healthy food at regular intervals, proper rest and a good night's sleep can counter stress and maintain balance in life. A person's attitude towards life is finally the determining factor in how s/he deals with stress. A good balance between work life and enjoying the pleasures of being alive and well is the key to a person's well being. No one remedy works for all. It is up to each one of us to take a long hard look at the way we spend each day and decide on the things that we can change to lead better, more productive, healthier and happier lives. References McEwen Bruce Ph. D and Krahn Dean M. D. The Doctor will see you now June 25th. 2011 Stress The Response to Stress Retrieved from <http://www.thedoctorwillseeyounow.com/content/stress/art1965.html> Scott Elizabeth M. S. About. com Guide June 23, 2011 Retrieved from <http://stress.about.com/b/2011/06/23/life-coach-tips-ways-to-reduce-stress.htm>