

The impact of stress and its effect on society

[Health & Medicine](#), [Stress](#)



Introduction Stress is like a fever boiling in the human system, as it rises, the body weakens. What exactly is the meaning of stress, and how does it affect the daily lives of people? Stress can be defined as an unpleasant state of emotional and physiological arousal that people experience in situations that they either perceive as dangerous or threatening to their well being (Morrow 2011). A person can undergo stress throughout their daily lives, and for many, stress is so commonplace that it has become a way of life.

The correlation between stress and age has been studied continuously throughout recent years (Morrow 2011). Some people define stress as events or situations that cause them to feel tension, pressure, or negative emotions such as anxiety and anger. The amount of stress can affect different age ranges of people around the world. What exactly are the causes of stress? How does stress correlate to men and women of different ages? Does stress play a larger role in youth and adolescence, middle-aged adults, or the senior citizens of the society?

I collected studies to help answer these questions on how stress impacts its effect on age and society. Causes of Stress There are many causes that affect stress. Stress is the emotional and physical way in which people respond to pressure (Seaward 2012). Physiological changes—such as increased heart rate and muscle tension—as well as emotional and behavioral changes are ways people respond to stress (Seaward 2012). Most psychologists regard stress as a process involving a person's interpretation and response to a threatening event.

In order to manage stressful situations people must first observe the general causes that can lead to stress. The UK's health and safety executive lists keys <https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-stress-and-its-effect-on-society/>

stress factors that could be the causes of stress at work, some of which include the demand of a job, the control staff and how they do their job, and the relationship with their colleagues. (Seaward 2012). Perceived threats, social, and financial threats also lead a person to feel very stress. In particular, it will be worse when the person feels they have no response that can resolve the threat and it can affect the need for a sense of control(Seaward 2012). Fear or uncertainties are other causes of stress, as fear can lead to imagined outcomes, which are the real source of stress. Stressors could also include: death of a spouse or family member, a friend, a person's well being, injury, or a pregnancy. The Negative vs. The Positive First of all it is good to know that stress is not only negative but it can also be positive and positively affect an individual. This positive stress aids an individual in motivation and inspiration to finish certain projects or creative thinking when completing a task.

For athletes this stress arises before the competition, for some it may arise during a joy ride on a rollercoaster, and for others it may arise when watching an exciting movie(Mills, Reiss, & Dombeck, 2012). The lives of people are almost daily affected by both types positive and negative stress. A type of short-term stress that increases a person's immediate strength is known as eustress, it comes in effect at times of creativity, physical activity, enthusiasm or excitement(Mills, Reiss, & Dombeck, 2012).

Negative stress, however, can arise when a normal routine is constantly altered and adjusted, Humans who try to adapt to new situations are faced with distress that causes feelings of discomfort, anxiety and unfamiliarity (Mills, Reiss, & Dombeck, 2012). Distress is often divided into two types of

stress, acute stress and chronic stress. Acute stress is a short-term stress that intensifies and disappears quickly. A more severe type of distress is chronic stress, it is long-term stress that can exist for weeks, months or in worst case even years (Mills, Reiss, & Dombeck, 2012).

Constant change in routine demands on someone or forces them to adjust can be stressful. . In small doses, stress can motivate and help perform someone under pressure, but it could also have a negative impact on the mind and body of a human. Stress and Gender The physiology of the stress response is similar for everyone. Researchers believe that there are distinct differences in the way women and men experience and respond to stress (e. g. , Bekker, & Boselie, K, 2002).

Community surveys taken in many countries find women consistently report greater distress than men do in study of roughly 1, 100 American adults that appeared in The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, found that women were more likely than men to experience ongoing stress and feel that their lives were out of their control (e. g. , Bekker, & Boselie, K, 2002). Social responsibilities typically handled by women some of which including child care, care of older relatives, and housework are exposes of more abundant opportunities for distress (e. g. , Bekker, &

Boselie, K, 2002). Men more often report financial stress than women do, which makes sense since men are traditionally expected to be breadwinners. In a UCLA study analyzed data from hundreds of biological and behavioral studies concluded that females were more likely to deal with stress by nurturing those around them and reaching out to others (e. g. , Bekker, & Boselie, K, 2002). Men, on the other hand, were more likely to sequester

themselves or initiate a confrontation, behavior in line with the "fight or flight" response that's long been associated with stress (e. g. Bekker, & Boselie, K, 2002). Men and women's different reactions to stress might be more than just an interesting observation, it could account for differences in their longevity and health (Millius 2011). Stress in Youth and Adolescence Stress in early childhood is experienced in many forms, and it varies by the each individual with the child's developmental level, and their previous life experiences (Jewett & Peterson 2002). Adapting or managing stress appears to be highly dependent on a child's developmental capabilities and coping-skill inventory (Jewett & Peterson 2002).

Children under the age of 6 are developmentally less capable of thinking about an event in its entirety; such as, comprehending an event separate from their own feelings; and modifying their physical reactions in response to change in stimuli (Jewett & Peterson 2002). The increasing knowledge about the importance and impact of stress on young children should be put to good use in reducing stress factors for young children and in assisting children to increase coping strategies and healthy responses to the unavoidable stresses in their lives (Jewett and Peterson 2002).

The adolescent years are among the most stressful times in a person's life. Adolescence is the time of life when children change into adults. They are going through puberty, meeting the changing expectations of others, and coping with feelings that may be new to them. Adolescents are between stages their thoughts, behavior, and social relations are all changing radically and this is when stress is most likely to occur. Stress in Adulthood and Old Age An adult has so many responsibilities that have to do with work,

family and even friends. Today, more and more adults continue with bad habits that might have come as a result of stress.

These habits include abuse of substances like drugs and alcohol (Millius 2011). This is because many are not able to deal fully with their issues and they feel like nobody can help them. Stress at adulthood is caused by very many factors and the first one is financial obligations (Millius 2011). Men and women are constantly working hard to provide for their families but, the money seems to be never enough and this leads to a lot of frustration. Many adults continue to be stressed and this has resulted to other effects like poor health (Millius 2011).

Older adults prolonged stress that can come from chronic illness, disability or the loss of a spouse. These types of stressors are long term and could be more difficult to deal with. The stress hormones that stimulate the brain and body can take a toll on an older person that can damage brain cells which could lead to depression (e. g, Smith, Smith & Segal 2012). Often adults experience fatigue, loss of memory and concentration, and an increased risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease and cancer. Body and Prevention A person must first recognize the signs and symptoms of stress and taking steps to reduce its harmful effects.

Stress symptoms can affect the human body, thoughts, feelings, and a person's behavior. Stress that's left unchecked can contribute to health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes (Marrow 2011). With widespread damage that stress can cause, it is important to know one's own limit. How much stress is "too much" differs from person to person. Some people roll with the punches,
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while others crumble at the slightest obstacle or frustration, while others seem to thrive on the excitement and challenge of a high-stress lifestyle.

The ability to tolerate stress depends on many factors including the general quality of relationships, their outlook on life, emotional intelligence, and genetics (Marrow 2011). Exercising regularly and learning relaxation techniques such as, deep breathing, meditation and yoga can be helpful. Accept that there are situations that can not be controlled and seeing the positive aspects of change and solve whatever problems you can and let go of the rest. Conclusion Stress challenges can help people to grow. We have seen how stress correlates to age and gender and what the major causes of stress are.

Examining and taking action on the negative and positive aspects of stressful situations we are equipping ourselves to tackle more challenging tasks in our working life. Stress References: Bekker, M. H. J. and Boselie, K. A. H. M. (2002), Gender and stress: is gender role stress? A re-examination of the relationship between feminine gender role stress and eating disorders. *Stress and Health*, 18: 141-149. Jewett, J & Peterson, K (2002). Stress and Young Children. *Eric Digest*. Champaign, IL Retrieved from <http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/eearchive/digests/2002/jewett02>. df Harry Mills, Ph. D. , Natalie Reiss, Ph. D. and Mark Dombeck,(2012) Positive and negative stress. Retrieved from http://info.emergencehealthnetwork.org/poc/view_doc.php?type=doc=16151=474 Millius, S (2011, September 24). Early stress is contagious in adulthood. *Volume 180 #7* (p. 14) Retrieved from http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/333416/title/Early_stress_is_contagious_in_adulthood

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