

In This Issue:

- P.1 Ease Your Tension With Relaxation Techniques
- P.1 The Effects of Chronic Stress
- P.2 Stress: Not a Good Look
- P.2 Managing the Pressures of Stress
- P.3 Financial Stress-It's Not a Bed of Roses
- P.3 Time Is On Your Side
- P.4 Healthy Recipe
- P.4 Cartoon Corner
- P.4 Upcoming Events
- P.4 Healthy Swap

CITY OF MISSION
September 2015



Health & Wellness Highlights

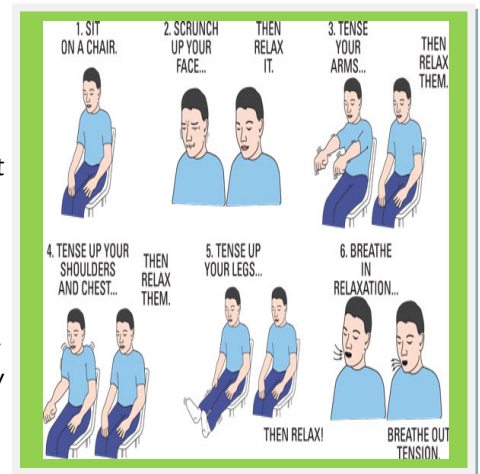
WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S EDITION OF **HEALTH & WELLNESS HIGHLIGHTS**. IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL BE HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF:

Stress Management

Ease Your Tension With Relaxation Techniques

You can experience stress any time and any place. Fortunately, there are simple relaxation techniques to help ease the tension wherever you are. These techniques can also improve your sleep, boost concentration and give you more energy.

- Deep breathing:** When stressed, your breaths become rapid and shallow, your heart rate increases and your muscles become tense. Deep breathing signals the brain to relax itself and is a key element of many other relaxation exercises. This technique is an easy one to learn.
- Deep breathing exercise:** Find a comfortable position in a chair or lie on your back. Then slowly relax your body. Inhale slowly through your nose. Fill the lower part of your chest first, then the middle and top part of your chest and lungs. Do this slowly over eight to 10 seconds. Hold your breath for two seconds. Then quietly and easily relax and exhale. Wait a few seconds and repeat this cycle three times.
- Visualization** Use your imagination and senses to create a mental journey to a calm and peaceful place or situation.
- Visualization exercise:** Sit in a comfortable chair or lie on your back with your eyes closed. Imagine yourself in a peaceful place, like the beach, mountains or your favorite comfy chair. Imagine you are there. See and feel your surroundings, hear the peaceful sounds, smell the air, feel the climate or any sensation you find. Relax and enjoy it.
- Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)** This two-step process teaches you to relax your muscles by tensing specific muscle groups. Whenever you create tension in a muscle then release the tension, the muscle has to relax. By practicing PMR regularly, your entire body will become more relaxed as it releases tension.
- Progressive muscle relaxation exercise:** Find a quiet space and a comfortable position in a chair that supports your head and neck, or lie on your back. Close your eyes and take several deep breaths. Tighten the muscles in your hands by clenching a tight fist, hold for four counts and then release. Feel the difference between tight and relaxed muscles. • Repeat this process for other muscles starting with your facial muscles. Then move on to other muscle groups. Remember, if you experience any discomfort while practicing these techniques, stop and consult your physician before continuing.



Sources: Northwestern Health Sciences University; Mayo Clinic

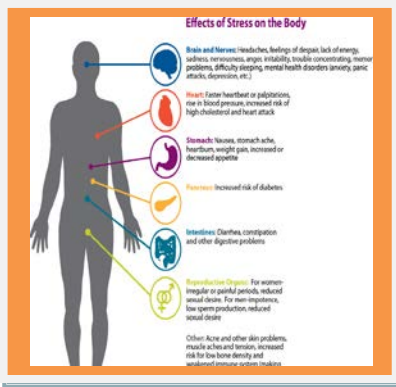
The Effects of Chronic Stress

- Mouth** – Mouth ulcers and excessive dryness of the mouth are often symptoms of stress.
- Muscles** – Spasms, pain in the neck and shoulders, lower back pain, and various minor muscular twitches and nervous tics are more noticeable under stress.
- Reproductive organs** – Stress affects the reproductive system and can cause menstrual disorders and infections in women, and impotence in men.
- Skin** – Some individuals react to stress with outbreaks of skin problems such as eczema and psoriasis.
- Hair** – High stress levels can cause excessive hair loss and baldness.

Stress is not a good look or feeling. Take the proper precautions, learn your stressors, and manage your stress effectively.

Source: American Institute of Stress





Stress: Not A Good Look

We live in an age where our health and physical appearance are top of mind. We all want to look and feel good and have that reflected in our attitude. Before you go to work, you probably make an extra effort to ensure that your attire is appropriate for your work and that you are neat and well groomed. However, if you are under high stress, no matter how you dress, it will probably show in your appearance—and it's not a good look.

The physical effects of stress

High stress has many physical and mental effects that you can't disguise. Below are things you should know about the toll of stress on your body.

- 👉 **Brain** – Stress can trigger problems such as insomnia, headaches, personality changes, irritability, anxiety, depression and even stroke.
- 👉 **Digestive tract** – Stress can cause diseases in the digestive tract including gastritis, stomach and duodenal ulcers, ulcerative colitis and irritable colon.
- 👉 **Immune System** – Chronic stress weakens the body's ability to fight infections and viruses, and increases the amount of time it takes the body to recover from illness.
- 👉 **Heart** – Cardiovascular disease, hypertension and heart attacks are linked to stress.
- 👉 **Lungs** – High levels of emotional stress can trigger asthma attacks and other asthmatic conditions.

Source: American Institute of Stress

Managing The Pressures Of Stress

Stress is a normal part of life, and it affects everyone in one way or another. Low to moderate levels of stress can actually be good for you when managed properly. But extreme levels of stress can take a physical and mental toll on your health and contribute to severe problems such as heart attack, stroke and depression. Although you can't completely eliminate tension from your life, you can reduce your emotional and physical stress levels by making small changes. Try the following tips to help manage your stress:

- 👉 **Understand how you experience stress** Everyone experiences stress differently. How do you know when you are under extreme stress? You may think or behave differently from times when you do not feel stressed.
- 👉 **Identify your stressors** What events or situations trigger stressful feelings? Are they related to your children, family, health, finances, work, relationships or something else?
- 👉 **Learn your own stress signals** You may have a hard time concentrating and making decisions, feel angry, irritable or out of control. Some people experience headaches, muscle tension or a lack of energy when stress is high.
- 👉 **Recognize how you deal with stress** Determine if you are using unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol or over/under eating to cope. Are these routine behaviors, or are they specific to certain events or situations? Do you make unhealthy choices as a result of feeling rushed and overwhelmed?
- 👉 **Find healthy ways to manage stress** Consider healthy, stress-reducing activities like meditation, physical activity or talking things out with friends or family. Keep in mind that unhealthy behaviors develop over time and can be difficult to change. Try not to take on too much at once. Focus on changing only one behavior at a time.
- 👉 **Take care of yourself** Eat right, get enough sleep, drink plenty of water and engage in regular physical activity. Ensure you have a healthy mind and body through activities like yoga, walking or playing sports. Take regular vacations and breaks from work. No matter how hectic life gets, make time for yourself.
- 👉 **Reach out for support** Accepting help from supportive friends and family may improve your ability to manage stress. If you continue to feel overwhelmed by stress, you may want to talk to a psychologist or counselor who can help you better identify and change unhealthy behaviors.



Source: American Psychological Association

Financial Stress- It's Not a Bed of Roses

Are you dealing with financial concerns that have grown out of hand? Like other forms of stress, people may deal with financial stress by using unhealthy coping methods such as overeating, drinking and smoking. Or they may ignore the issues and avoid facing their problems altogether.

- 👉 **Nip financial stress in the bud**. Fortunately, there are things you can do to help reduce and relieve financial stress. But you may not be successful until you are able to identify and understand the situations that create financial stress for you. Once you have identified those triggers, you can develop strategies to help you deal with your stressors effectively.
- 👉 **Identify money stressors**. What events or situations trigger stressful feelings? Are they related to paying bills, money decisions and financial burdens at home or at work?
- 👉 **Think about how you deal with financial stress**. Are your responses compounding your problems? Do you turn to unproductive patterns such as overspending, misuse of credit cards, neglecting bills or constantly borrowing money in an effort to cope?

Cultivate A New Approach

- 👉 **Figure out what money means to you**. Money should be the means for taking care of your needs. However, money is often symbolic of emotional issues that may not seem linked to your personal finances. What does money represent to you? Is it associated with your feelings of accomplishment or self-worth? Do you use it for competitive advantage? How might these attitudes increase your stress? Try to focus on the core issues and deal with them. Before you spend money, ask yourself, "Am I spending to make me feel better?"
- 👉 **Develop a game plan**. Impulse buying with credit cards, daily trips to the mall and ignoring your savings account can be signs of poor financial management. Use budget plans and tools to help you recognize where you're spending your money.
- 👉 **Reduce stress by not spending money**. Find healthy, stress-reducing activities that don't cost you anything. For example, take a short walk, read a book, work in your garden, or hang out with family and friends. Keep in mind, unhealthy habits develop over a course of time and may not be easy to change.



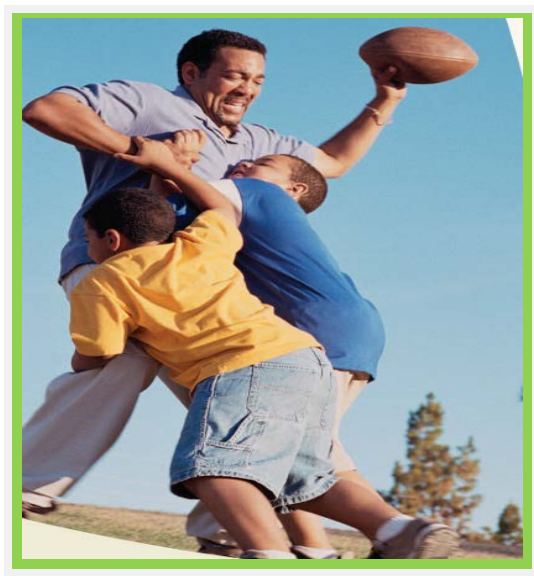
Source: American Psychological Association

Time Is On Your Side

Do you over commit? Have a hard time saying no? Do you procrastinate? Are you overwhelmed with projects and activities? Are you always running late? Answering "yes" to these questions may be a sign of poor time management. The way you manage your time can have a big impact on your health. With effective time management you can reduce stress, use your time more effectively and improve your quality of life.

Not sure where to start? Try these tips:

- 👉 **Create a daily schedule** - Planning your day can help you gain more control of your life. Jot down a to-do list and put tasks in order of importance. A schedule can help you avoid last-minute rushes.
- 👉 **Say no to nonessential tasks**— You may not be able to turn down extra work from your boss, but try to find places you can reduce your involvement or responsibilities. Think twice before you agree to be part of teams or committees that are not part of your core job. Away from your job, limit extra activities when your personal time is too stretched.
- 👉 **Delegate**—Review your to-do list and see if there are jobs you can pass on to someone else. Take the time you need to do a quality job. Doing the work right the first time may take more time up-front, but errors usually result in having to spend extra time on corrections.



Tackling Time Management:

- 👉 **Break large, time-consuming projects into smaller jobs**— Work on them for a few minutes at a time until you finish them.
- 👉 **Practice the 10-minute rule**— Decide to work on a dreaded task for 10 minutes each day. Once you get started, you may find you can get into a rhythm and actually complete the task. Getting started is often the hardest part and causes you to procrastinate.
- 👉 **Think about how you're spending your time**— Keep a diary of everything you do for three days to see where your time goes. Look for time wasters and develop ways to spend your time more wisely.
- 👉 **Get plenty of sleep and physical activity**— Being alert after a good night's sleep can improve your focus so you can get your work done in less time. Physical activity gets the blood moving and increases your ability to concentrate.
- 👉 **Check out a time management course**— If your employer offers continuing education, take a time management class. If not, contact your local community college, community center or a university for a list of potential courses.
- 👉 **Take a break**— Too much stress can make you feel disorganized. When you need a break, take one. Go for a walk, do some quick stretches at your workstation, or take a day of vacation.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Healthy Recipe

Greens and Beans Burrito

Go green by adding cancer-fighting collard greens to your lunchtime wrap. Leafy greens, like collards, are packed with fiber and rich in cancer-protective carotenoids, vitamin K and the B vitamin folate. As a burrito shell, they add a crisp, refreshing taste to the bean, corn, rice and hummus filling. Enjoy this vegetarian dish as a brown bag at the office or with a side of soup for a quick and easy dinner.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 130 calories, 3 g total fat (<1 g saturated fat), 23 g carbohydrate, 6 g protein, 6 g dietary fiber, 201 mg sodium.

Ingredients:

- 🍴 4 large collard green leaves, rinsed
- 🍴 1/2 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 🍴 1/2 cup frozen whole kernel corn, thawed
- 🍴 1/2 cup cooked brown rice
- 🍴 1/3 cup hummus
- 🍴 1/4 cup chunky salsa, mild or medium
- 🍴 2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 🍴 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 🍴 1/2 tsp. oregano
- 🍴 1/4 tsp. cumin
- 🍴 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes, or to taste
- 🍴 Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

1. On cutting board, lay each collard green leaf with top up and gently smooth leaf. Slice 4-5 inches off bottom to remove large stem.
2. Bring large pot of water to boil. Drop leaves in and blanch 2-3 minutes. Carefully remove from pot and lay flat on kitchen towel to drain and cool. Lay leaves in assembly line manner with top end up and cut bottom down.
3. In mixing bowl, add remaining ingredients. Mix gently but thoroughly. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place mixture, evenly divided, in center of leaf and shape thick line from top to bottom leaving two inches at top and bottom. Gently fold up bottom edge, then top edge down. Next, fold left edge toward center and roll to right to form a burrito. Serve whole or cut diagonally in half.



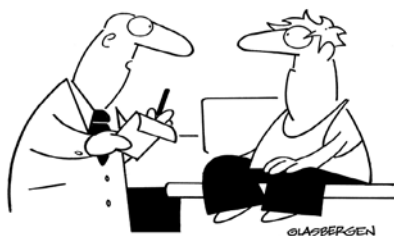
Mission In Motion

Our mission is to promote health awareness and to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Upcoming Events

**STRESS MANAGEMENT SEMINAR
DATES AND TIMES TO BE ANNOUNCED**

©Randy Glasbergen
glasbergen.com



"You're under a lot of stress. I'm prescribing ice cubes to help you chill out."



Noemi Munguia
Nereyda Peña
Catherine N. Hernandez
Anais Chapa

Human Resources Director
Benefits Coordinator
Human Resources Coordinator
Insurance Benefits Specialist