

Stress— Fact Sheet



What Can You Do?

There are several things you can do to help reduce stress:

- **Identify the Source-** Find the source of the stress and, if possible, resolve it.
- **Build Solid Relationships-** Reach out to those around you, they may be able to offer help if needed, have a different perspective or just give you the strength you need to work through the stress.
- **Rest Your Mind-** Find a way to rest your mind. It could be watching a movie, playing a game or even prayer.
- **Exercise-** Getting active can increase endorphins, or “feel-good” brain chemicals which may reduce stress, relieve depression and increase sleep.
- **Breathe-** Controlled breathing is subtle but can reduce stress and invokes a relaxation response. This can be achieved through breathing exercises or meditation.

Foods, Nutrients and Stress

When you are stressed your body is depleted of key nutrients such as B vitamins, vitamin C, magnesium and zinc.

B Vitamins- Bananas, spinach, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, avocados, nuts (Hazelnuts, Almonds, Brazil nuts, & cashews), seeds (sunflower & pumpkin) and also meat, chicken, fish and dairy products should be consumed to obtain the different B Vitamins.

Vitamin C – We cannot make vitamin C which is a key antioxidant and important for immune function. Good sources include fruits and vegetables such as oranges, grapefruit, kiwifruit, green and red peppers, broccoli, tomatoes and spinach.

Magnesium – The stress response increases chemical reactions in the body which can use up magnesium. In addition, magnesium can help to relax the muscles. Magnesium intake can be increased via taking an Epsom salt bath, which is absorbed through the skin. Intake is ideally improved via consumption of magnesium rich foods such as raw pumpkin seeds, Brazil nuts, leafy greens such as spinach and Swiss chard, raisin, broccoli, almonds, quinoa, or beans.

Zinc- Zinc is also a key element in the body. Key sources of zinc would include beef, pumpkin seeds, cashews, lentils, garbanzo beans, pork, turkey and green peas.

Stress is a primal response.

When we perceive a stressful situation, or threat, the nervous system sends signals to the rest of the body to prepare its response.

“*Fight-or-Flight*” response which gives us a burst of energy during times of danger. This will cause the blood flow to shift towards the muscles, heightens awareness and increases heart rate.

“*Rest-and-Digest*” response for other times of stress focuses on growth, energy storage, and digestion shuts down but will resume once the perceived danger has passed.

Signs of Stress

The effects of stress are real and impact the mind and the body where one might experience:

Amplified emotions	Nausea
Anxiety	Increased heart rate
Agitation	Heart palpitations
Moodiness	Hives or rashes
Nervous habits	Appetite variances
Lack of concentration or focus	Insomnia
Muscle tension	Elevated blood pressure
Achiness	Alterations in digestion
Dizziness	

Effects of Stress

We were designed to respond to a stressful situation and move on, but in today’s world that becomes increasingly difficult to do so much of the stress response stays in the “on” position which can lead to ongoing illnesses such as:

*Obesity *Diabetes *Cardiovascular diseases *Asthma
*Chronic lowered immunity *Depression *Alzheimer’s disease *Depletes Nutrients *Gastrointestinal problems

Key foods that should be avoided:

Caffeine
Alcohol
Highly Refined Sugary Foods

Possible Supplements- if you are not able to eat a wide variety foods...

B Complex, Vitamin C, Magnesium Glycinate, Zinc

****Before beginning with any supplementation protocol, please consult your doctor- especially if on medications.*