



Partners in Quality Care

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In-Home Aides Partners in Quality Care is a monthly newsletter published for member agencies.

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Objectives

Define Stress

Define how stress affects health

Describe strategies for coping with stress



Greetings and best wishes to you for a glorious Holiday season filled with peace, rest and wonderful Holiday memories!

Working as an In-Home Aide is hard work, therefore, this month's newsletter is dedicated to taking care of you! Taking care of yourself as you take care of others is an important part of your overall wellbeing.

STRESS-HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT:

- Stress — just the word may be enough to set your nerves on edge. Everyone feels stressed from time to time. Some people may cope with stress more effectively or recover from stressful events quicker than others. It's important to know your limits when it comes to stress to avoid more serious health effects.
- Stress can be defined as the brain's response to any demand. Many things can trigger this response, including change. Changes can be positive or negative, as well as real or perceived. They may be recurring, short-term, or long-term and may include things like commuting to and from school or work every day, traveling for a yearly vacation, or moving to another home. Changes can be mild and relatively harmless, such as winning a race, watching a scary movie, or riding a rollercoaster. Some changes are major, such as marriage or divorce, serious illness, or a car accident. Other changes are extreme, such as exposure to violence, and can lead to traumatic stress reactions.
- Not all stress is bad. All animals have a stress response, which can be life-saving in some situations. The nerve chemicals and hormones released during such stressful times, prepares the animal to face a threat or flee to safety. When you face a dangerous situation, your pulse quickens, you breathe faster, your muscles tense, your brain uses more oxygen and increases activity—all functions aimed at survival. In the short term, it can even boost the immune system.
- However, with chronic stress, those same nerve chemicals that are life-saving in short bursts can suppress functions that aren't needed for immediate survival. Your immunity is lowered and your digestive, excretory, and reproductive systems stop working normally. Once the threat has passed, other body systems act to restore normal functioning. Problems occur if the stress response goes on too long, such as when the source of stress is constant, or if the response continues after the danger has subsided.

How can women develop well-being and balance?

- | Confront stress—Face and manage stress rather than hide it with unhealthy coping.
- | Face change—Accept change as a challenge and opportunity, not a threat.
- | Focus on the present—Stay in the present. It doesn't help to worry about the future.
- | Listen to your mind—Examine beliefs and how they influence life.
- | Integrate love, work, and play—Learn how to live fully in each area.
- | Practice acceptance—Accept the things that cannot be changed and change the things you can.
- | Accept yourself—Honor and love your inner self.
- | Seek professional help—Seek professional help in managing difficult stress.





How does stress affect your overall health?



There are at least three different types of stress, all of which carry physical and mental health risks:

- Routine stress related to the pressures of work, family and other daily responsibilities.
- Stress brought about by a sudden negative change, such as losing a job, divorce, or illness.
- Traumatic stress, experienced in an event like a major accident, war, assault, or a natural disaster where one may be seriously hurt or in danger of being killed.
- The body responds to each type of stress in similar ways. Different people may feel it in different ways. For example, some people experience mainly digestive symptoms, while others may have headaches, sleeplessness, depressed mood, anger and irritability. People under chronic stress are prone to more frequent and severe viral infections, such as the flu or common cold, and vaccines, such as the flu shot, are less effective for them.
- Of all the types of stress, changes in health from routine stress may be hardest to notice at first. Because the source of stress tends to be more constant than in cases of acute or traumatic stress, the body gets no clear signal to return to normal functioning. *Over time, continued strain on your body from routine stress may lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, anxiety disorder, and other illnesses.*

Coping with Stress:

(This list is not all inclusive, these are some of the more common symptoms we see. Check both list, to determine how you are coping. Then set goals to improve if needed)

Healthy

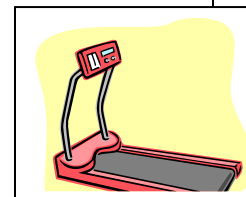
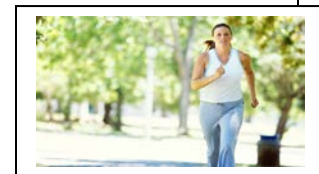
- Learn to say no
- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Rest
- Time Management
- Laughter/Fun
- Relaxation

Unhealthy

- Over/under eating
- Smoking
- Use of Alcohol
- Drugs
- Isolation
- Sleep deprivation
- Procrastination

Healthy Coping- Exercise

- Walking
- Jogging
- Workout
- Bicycling
- May be formal or informal workout
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Pilates
-



Health Coping- Learn to say no

- Do you ever say Yes, when you mean No?
 - Too much responsibility can create unusual amounts of stress
 - Know how much you can handle
 - Prioritize what must be done in a day
 - Save some time for yourself

Healthy coping- time management

- Planning & organizing the day will help decrease the stress of getting behind
- Prioritizing is a big part of the time management activity
- Maintaining a schedule will promote success with time management
- Technique to gain control over one's life, while finding solution to time wasters

Healthy coping- talking to someone:

- Venting your feelings, worries, stressors to a trusted friend or family member
- May be in person, or telephone
- If no one to talk to writing thoughts/feelings may be helpful and then may destroy document when finished
- See a therapist if needed

COPING WITH STRESS:

The effects of stress tend to build up over time. Taking practical steps to maintain your health and outlook can reduce or prevent these effects. The following are some tips that may help you to cope with stress:

- Seek help from a qualified mental health care provider if you are overwhelmed, feel you cannot cope, have suicidal thoughts, or are using drugs or alcohol to cope.
- Get proper health care for existing or new health problems.
- Stay in touch with people who can provide emotional and other support. Ask for help from friends, family, and community or religious organizations to reduce stress due to work burdens or family issues, such as caring for a loved one.
- Recognize signs of your body's response to stress, such as difficulty sleeping, increased alcohol and other substance use, being easily angered, feeling depressed, and having low energy.
- Set priorities-decide what must get done and what can wait, and learn to say no to new tasks if they are putting you into overload.
- Note what you have accomplished at the end of the day, not what you have been unable to do.
- Avoid dwelling on problems. If you can't do this on your own, seek help from a qualified mental health professional who can guide you.
- Exercise regularly-just 30 minutes per day of gentle walking can help boost mood and reduce stress.
- Schedule regular times for healthy and relaxing activities.
- Explore stress coping programs, which may incorporate meditation, yoga, tai chi, or other gentle exercises.

If you or someone you know is overwhelmed by stress, ask for help from a health professional. If you or someone close to you is in crisis, call the toll-free, 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

Caregiver View



Client View



Resources:
National
Institute of
Mental Health;
NC PHCAST
training phase
IV Hospice
and palliative
care module 5-
Taking Care of
you; The
Cleveland
Clinic- Work,
Home
Multiple Roles
and Stress

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Post Test-Taking Care of You- December 2014

Name _____

Date: _____

1. Stress can be defined as the brain's response to any demand (circle true or false)

True False
2. All stress is bad (circle true or false)

True False
3. Chronic stress can cause health problems (circle true or false)

True False
4. Routine stress is related to the pressures of work, family and other daily responsibilities (circle true or false)

True False
5. Everyone feels the effects of stress on the body in the same way (circle true or false)

True False
6. Of all the types of stress, changes in health from routine stress may be hardest to notice at first (circle true or false)

True False
7. There are ways to cope with stress (circle true or false)

True False
8. The effects of stress tend to build up over time (circle true or false)

True False
9. Planning & organizing the day will help decrease the stress of getting behind (circle true or false)

True False
10. Everyone feels stressed from time to time (circle true or false)

True False

Bonus- think about any new ways you can cope with stress that you have learned from the newsletter and try to incorporate one suggestion a week for the next month!