

STRESS

This is the age of stress and anxiety. We live in a fast-paced, rapidly changing world. The strains and pressures of daily life are steadily building up. Those who can't cope will eventually see a "physical" breakdown as a result.

Not all stress is bad, but when stress is not managed and used properly, it has a harmful effect on the body. This unpleasant and destructive stress is actually *distress*. Disturbed by distress, the body will suffer in some way. The list of consequent mental and physical ailments aggravated by stress is long and increasing. They include ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease, migraine headaches, diabetes, allergies, colitis and list of others. Stress is even linked with causing certain forms of cancer according to recent evidence. Uncurbed emotional stress increases muscle tension and biochemical changes in the body to the point that its defenses against disease are reduced.

You may not always know when you are under stress. Even though you don't feel tense and under pressure, your body knows and suffers from the effects stress produces.

What causes stress? Three major categories of situations can cause stress. One is the loss of someone or something. Another is a situation involving a threat of some kind. The third is a change in your way of life. The change can involve marital status, health, type of work, responsibilities, etc.

Since we cannot avoid all stress, we need to learn to live with it. Improving your health is the first coping strategy you can use. Exercise relieves tension. Since stress burns up energy and causes fatigue, you must eat regular meals of nutritious food and get adequate sleep. You must also take time out for relaxation. When pressures mount, our minds need a diversion.

Change your way of thinking. Negative emotions damage the physical body. Learn to think good and up lifting thoughts. Focus your mind on the good in others, avoid gossip, rumors and destructive thoughts about them. Attempt to understand how others feel and be willing to forgive their shortcomings.

Also important to controlling our stress level is knowing your strengths and weaknesses. Live within your means. The effort and energy you lose "keeping up with the Joneses" is worth your health. Be content with what you have.

Learn how to make wise decisions to solve problems. You must make decisions every day. It can be made easier by first getting all the relevant facts, including gathering information and seeking counsel from those having knowledge and wisdom to guide you.

Don't be afraid of making mistakes. What we think are mistakes can be seen as growing experiences. Once you've made your decision, the tension and stress caused by indecision will disappear.

STRESS & DIET

A diet differs from a menu. A menu is simply a list of foods to eat. A diet is a METHOD of eating. A low stress diet is based upon moderation. "Moderation" means something different to everyone.

The purpose of a low stress diet is to remove imposed stresses on the digestive system and the metabolism of the body by eliminating excesses from the diet. It does this by taking into consideration the following:

Four Basic Qualifications for food

1. The quality of foods eaten.
2. The quantity of foods eaten.
3. The nutritional concentration of foods eaten.
4. The digestibility of foods eaten.

Definition of Dietary Excess: An excess is defined as that food or amount of food which exceeds the body's ability to handle it efficiently, or any food additive or other substance foreign to the body.

The effects of dietary excesses are threefold:

1. Systemic overload – When more food is taken into the body than can be efficiently utilized to serve its purposes. Various diseases are aggravated by overloading. Most obvious is obesity.
2. Digestive overload – When there is a deficiency of digestive enzymes and more food is taken into the body than can be broken down into simpler substances and absorbed (digested). This causes Toxicity buildup and a condition to be avoided.

3. Foreign substances – When we take into our body substances which are foreign to it and foreign to the defense mechanisms which are called upon to rid the body of such substances. This is considered to be contamination and avoided.

General rules.

1. Allow the appetite to dictate eating times. **DO NOT EAT EXCEPT WHEN HUNGRY.** Those with poor appetite will find their appetite will increase when sugars and starches are restricted.
2. Eat whole forms as much as possible. Whole foods provide nutrition in the least concentrated form.
3. Never combine sugars with proteins. Desserts, fruits, etc. should only be eaten several hours after eating; between meals.
4. Eat animal source foods not containing preservatives in moderation.
5. Eat raw foods with every meal. The best raw foods are salads.
6. Eat small meals, but eat as often as you are hungry.

Objectives

The low stress diet aids in detoxification mechanism by taking the stress off of the metabolic systems. You may notice the difference by increased energy, improved nerves and fewer digestive problems. Bowel movement should also be improved where there has been constipation.