VITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Managing **Stress**



Stress is the body's natural response to any demand or threatening situation. In the context of health, stress is the body's reaction to various life challenges or stressors. A **stressor** can be in many different forms – physical threat, infection or illness, negative thoughts or strong emotions.

One Response. The body responds to all stressors in the same way by activating the sympathetic branch of your nervous system known as "fight or flight." Bodies are prepared to handle **acute stress** (short term), but **chronic stress** (long term) can cause **chronic inflammation**.

Chronic inflammation can increase risk for many diseases and disorders. Chronic inflammation **links** chronic stress to chronic disease.

Eight Ways to Manage and Prevent Chronic Stress

Maintain a Positive Attitude

A positive attitude is a key part of effective stress management. A positive attitude stops negative self-talk and promotes positive resolutions to stressful experiences.

Be Mindful of Your Thoughts

Mindfulness promotes self-awareness, breathing, muscle relaxation and meditation. Mindfulness helps us let go of generalized anxiety and worry.

Retrain Your Autonomic Reflex Responses

Have an expanded perspective. See the problem in a new way. Think about the choices that you have at hand regarding interpretation of stressful situations and your responses. Make a plan for when you experience stress.

Choose Healthy Foods

Eating a healthy diet can help counter the impact of stress by supporting the immune system and lowering blood pressure. Focus on consuming fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and seafood.

Participate in Moderate Exercise

Exercise reduces the body's stress hormones and stimulates endorphins that are the body's natural mood elevators. Keep it simple. Move in all the ways your body is able to move. Pick something you enjoy doing.

Get Adequate Sleep

Your body does the majority of its healing while you are asleep. Do your best to maintain a regular sleep/ wake cycle by going to bed at the same time every day. Adults should get around 7-8 hours of sleep each night.

Use Your Social Circle

Connecting with your family and friends helps to give a sense of belonging and self-worth and can help you get through tough times.

Learn to Say No

Take control over the parts of your life that you can change and that are causing you stress. Being selective about what you take on and saying no to things that will unnecessarily add to your load.

For Additional Wellness Offerings
Login to Your Wellness Portal
my-wellnessportal.com | *(password: Wellness1)*

Proactive. Engaged. Personalized.
myhealthonsite.com

https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.Pdf

My Health Onsite Adheres to All HIPAA & Confidentiality Regulations | © 2024 My Health Onsite | All Rights Reserved | REV101824



Mindfulness

The practice of being fully present and aware of your thoughts and actions. Through awareness, you learn how to not be overly reactive or overwhelmed by life's many, inevitable stressors.

Practice Mindfulness

- **Mindfulness Meditation**:
  Sit quietly and focus on your natural breathing or on a word or "mantra" that you repeat silently. Allow thoughts to come and go without judgement and return to your focus on breath or mantra.
- **Body Sensation**:
  Notice subtle body sensations such as an itch or tingling without judgement and let them pass. Notice each part of your body in succession from head to toe.
- **Sensory**:
  Notice sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches. Name them "sight", "sound", "smell", "taste", or "touch" without judgement and let them go.
- **Emotions**:
  Allow emotions to be present without judgement. Practice a steady and relaxed naming of emotions: "joy", "anger", "frustration." Accept the presence of the emotion without judgement and let them go.
- **Urge Surfing**:
  Cope with cravings and allow them to pass. Notice how your body feels as the craving enters. Replace the wish for the craving to go away with the certain knowledge it will subside.

Mindfulness Medication Exercises

1. Sit on a straight-backed chair or crosslegged on the floor.
2. Focus on an aspect of your breathing, such as the sensation of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth, or your belly rising and falling as you inhale and exhale.
3. Once you've narrowed your concentration in this way, begin to widen your focus. Become aware of sounds, sensations and your ideas.
4. Embrace and consider each thought or sensation without judging it good or bad. If your mind starts to race, return your focus to your breathing. Then expand your awareness again.

Free Mindfulness Apps on your Phone!

- **Calm**
- **Aura**
- **Headspace**
- **Stop, Breathe, Think**
- **Insight Timer**
- **iPhone Health App – Mindful Minutes**

MY WELLNESS PORTAL™
For Additional Wellness Offerings
Login to Your Wellness Portal
my-wellnessportal.com | *(password: Wellness1)*

MY HEALTH ONSITE℠
Proactive. Engaged. Personalized.
myhealthonsite.com

https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.Pdf

My Health Onsite Adheres to All HIPAA & Confidentiality Regulations | © 2024 My Health Onsite | All Rights Reserved | REV101824