



Understanding Stress



Stress is your body's way of responding to pressures. When your body reacts to stress, your heart races, your muscles tighten, and you become pumped up. Putting your body in a constant state of "fight or flight" can leave you feeling burned out. You can only push yourself so hard, for so long.

When managed successfully, stress can help you be your best. Unresolved stress can lead to emotional and physical problems. Take stock, how do you handle your stress?

Stress symptoms are your body's cry for help. Even minor signs of stress are early warning signals that call for your attention. Don't ignore them. Left unchecked, they can contribute to problems with your family, health, and job performance.

Stress is caused not only by "bad" events, but "good" events as well. Some examples of happy events that cause stress are: a wedding, birth of a baby, promotion, buying a house, public speaking, moving, graduation, and physical exercise.

Everyone copes with stress differently. What works to relieve stress for others, might not work for you. Keep trying different methods until you find one that fits your lifestyle. You can't eliminate stress, but you can try to plan your day so that stress doesn't overwhelm you. Identify events that stress you, avoid what you can, and use your energy, optimism, and support system to tackle the rest.

