



Stress Preview

Back

Stress



Discusses the diagnosis and treatment of stress

If someone says, "I'm stressed" we all know what they mean. Stress is a normal part of life. However, prolonged stress can be harmful, leading to all kinds of health issues from anxiety and depression to stroke or heart attack.^{1a,2}

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is your body's natural response to real or imagined pressure or threats.^{3a}

In small quantities it is not necessarily bad. In certain circumstances it can be good for your health. In fact, some people thrive on it.^{4,5a} For instance, it can motivate you to focus and get things done like meeting an important deadline at work or running a marathon.^{3b} Stress can even save your life by keeping you alert and giving you an extra boost of energy to defend yourself against an attacker or to prevent a car accident.^{2c}



WHAT CAUSES STRESS AND WHO IS AT RISK?

A stressor is a trigger or stimulus that causes stress. Stressors can be almost anything from leaving the washing out on the line on a rainy day to waiting for an important outcome, pregnancy, financial worries, marriage problems, hospitalisation or death.

Everyone experiences stress from time to time, and each of us reacts to it differently.^{1b} In other words, something that triggers one person in a certain way might trigger another person in a different way. For example, Max and Tom are at a theme park getting ready to ride a rollercoaster. While Max feels excited and alive, Tom feels nauseous and scared.

72% of South Africans reported that stress has at least some impact on their health.⁶

HOW THE BODY RESPONDS TO STRESSORS

In stress response or 'fight' or 'flight' mode, your body releases stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol. These cause your heart rate to speed up, your breathing rate to quicken and prepares your muscles to respond to the stressor by fighting, fleeing to safety (or freezing).^{3b,7}

For example, sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic on the way to the airport, worried about missing your flight, your heart begins to race and your stomach knots. Boarding at the last minute, you make your flight. As a result, your hormones rebalance and your stress levels drop.

Physiologically our caveman ancestors experienced stress in much the same way that we do. For example, when confronted with life-threatening situations like fending off a woolly mammoth their bodies would react in stress response mode, the same way that ours do today.



What to look out for

COGNITIVE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgement
- Extreme negativity
- Indecision
- Racing thoughts
- Constant worrying^{3d,8a}

EMOTIONAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Loneliness or isolation
- Anxiety and agitation
- Persistently fearful
- Moodiness, easily tearful, irritability or anger
- Sadness
- Frustration
- Depression or general unhappiness^{3e,8b}

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Withdrawing from others
- Eating more or less
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Procrastinating
- Being neglectful (self or others)
- Substance abuse – smoking, consuming excessive quantities of alcohol, or taking drugs^{3f,8c}

PHYSICAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Nausea, dizziness
- Headaches
- Digestive problems, diarrhoea or constipation
- Aches and pains (such as chest pain)
- Skin conditions (such as itching, rash, breakouts, eczema)
- Weight loss or gain
- Stomach problems (diarrhoea)
- Rapid heart rate
- Frequent colds or flu
- Loss of sex drive^{3a,8d}

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

While stress is common, diagnosis is complex and depends on numerous factors.⁹

If you feel that the demands made on you outweigh your capacity and you are persistently stressed out, speak to your doctor. Stress could also be symptomatic of an underlying problem for which your doctor might ask about your family history and take blood and urine tests to rule out various medical conditions.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOURSELF

While it is not always possible to remove the stressors that cause your stress, there are some things you can do to reduce its impact.

IDENTIFY THE WARNING SIGNS

Acknowledge that you are stressed, try to identify the warning signs (cognitive, emotional, behavioural and physical) Once you have acknowledged that you are stressed, and have identified at least some of the warning signs, try to identify the possible reasons for your stress^{8e}

TAKE CONTROL

Take small steps towards the things you can change. Focus on some (not necessarily all) of the things that trigger or make your stress worse:

Say yes only to the things you can realistically get to on your seemingly endless to do list
Learn to say no and mean it
Try not to do everything at once
Ask for help
Build supportive relationships^{8f}

MAKE SOME LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Regular physical activity, even 30 minutes 3 times a week is a natural way to relieve stress and, because it releases endorphins which help to improve mood

A growing library of evidence proves that what we put into our bodies impacts our mood so, ensure that your diet is filled with enough essential nutrients found in fruit, vegetables, whole grains and oily fish – consider taking a natural supplement to boost your intake
Take time for you to relax and practice self-care – finding a balance between the responsibility you feel towards others and your responsibility to yourself is crucial for reducing stress

Make sure you get enough sleep, not just adequate sleep every now and again but proper restful sleep every night – try limiting your caffeine intake, none preferably a couple of hours before going to bed, no screen time at least an hour before bed and make your bedroom a

[More Information](#)
[+ Medical References](#)

Brought to you by

FLORDIS™



Backed by years of clinical research, Remotiv® is a natural medicine that can help improve your ability to cope with stress by reducing stress symptoms. Pre-clinical studies suggest that it may work indirectly on chemicals in the brain linked with stress, tension, and mild to moderate anxiety and depression.



REMOTIV® HELPS TO:

Relieve stress and mild to moderate anxiety and depression by helping to ease feelings of worry and nervousness.¹⁰⁻¹²



Support a healthy mood by easing feelings of tension and supporting emotional balance.¹⁰⁻¹²



Relieve irritability and restlessness by easing feelings of unrest and nervous tension.¹⁰⁻¹²



<https://www.flordis.co.za/products/remotiv/>

Please note: This is educational information only and should not be used for diagnosis. For more information on stress, consult your healthcare professional.

Medical brochures developed



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS OVERLOAD

If your stress levels stay elevated, for long periods of time, longer than required to deal with an immediate threat or challenge, your body's natural stress response mechanism goes into overdrive. When this happens, it could put your health at serious risk.²⁶

no gadget zone²⁹

Finding a balance between the responsibility you feel towards others and your responsibility to yourself is crucial for reducing stress.



and managed by



medinformers.co.za