

ARE YOU STRESSED OUT?

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There are many things that can cause stress. Some common examples of stressors are: The recent events that have taken place in our country, being pulled between your career and your family, the start of school and all the activities that come with school, our hectic day to day lives, sickness of self or loved ones, death of a loved one, divorce or a bad relationship with a loved one, and the list could go on and on. There is no wonder people in this country complain so much of being "STRESSED OUT!" Hopefully, after reading this article, everyone will begin to find ways to regain control of their lives and decrease the level of bad stress in their lives!

Let me start by saying that stress can be a good thing. Stress is what serves to motivate us and realize the urgency of some issues. But, when you let stress begin to control every aspect of your life this is when we need to look at decreasing stress. The common physical symptoms of stress include: upset stomach, decreased or increased appetite, chronic headache, loss of sleep, rashes and rapid heartbeat. The common feelings associated with stress are: anxiousness, panic, irritability and tiredness. Also, let me say that if you feel you are under stress, you are. Someone may say to you, "Oh, you don't have any big problems. You shouldn't feel you're under stress." Stress however is subjective.

Let's look at some things we can do to decrease our stress level:

- #1. Examine the cause of the stress you have in your life. Is it something that you can work to control? You can keep a journal of when you feel the most stressed and then review it after a week or so to see when you are the most stressed. Keep in mind there are some things we have no control over.**
- #2. Time management and setting realistic goals and priorities. You cannot be all things for all people. Realizing this is a huge step in the right direction. It helps to have a daily planner and be able to know what things have to be done vs. the things that can wait.**
- #3. Exercise regularly. This helps to keep you in shape, but releases some of that built up stress.**
- #4. Get plenty of rest. Sometimes we forget how important sleep is to our bodies.**
- #5. Eat a well balanced meal. Also, try to cut down on your caffeine intake as caffeine is a stimulant. Also, limit your intake of alcohol.**
- #6. Talk to a friend or family member about how you are feeling. Sometimes it is good just to talk to someone else about how you are feeling. Remember sometimes a good cry does wonders.**
- #7. Try to be more positive. If you don't think it will get better, then it probably never will.**
- #8. Above all else, take time out for yourself. If you don't take care of yourself nobody else will, is an adage that is all too true! Schedule time everyday to do something you enjoy. Be open to compliments you receive from others.**
- #9. See/talk to your physician if you feel that your stress is completely out of control!**

