



Los Angeles County Office of Education
Serving Students • Supporting Communities • Leading Educators



STRESS MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE FOR EDUCATION (EASE)

LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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OBJECTIVES

- Increase understanding and awareness of stress; its causes, triggers, and effects
- Explore the biological, physiological, and social aspects of the human stress response
- Understand coping strategies for dealing effectively with stress
- Increase preparation to handle future stress by applying stress management strategies

What is STRESS?

- Stress is the body's reaction to any change.
- The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses.
- Stress is a normal part of life – but it can also be exacerbated by unexpected events.
- Stress can be experienced from your environment, your body, and your thoughts.



NOT ALL STRESS IS BAD...

Distress is a continuous experience of feeling overwhelmed, oppressed, and behind in our responsibilities. It is the all encompassing sense of being imposed upon by difficulties with no light at the end of the tunnel.

- Examples of distress include financial difficulties, conflicts in relationships, excessive obligations, problems at work, managing a chronic illness, or experiencing acute or historical trauma.

Eustress is the other form of stress that is positive and beneficial. We may feel challenged, but the sources of the stress are opportunities that are meaningful to us. Eustress helps provide us with energy and motivation to meet our responsibilities and achieve our goals.

- Examples of eustress include graduating from college, moving, getting married, receiving a promotion, or changing jobs.



Negative and Positive Personal Stressors

Examples of **negative** *personal stressors* include:

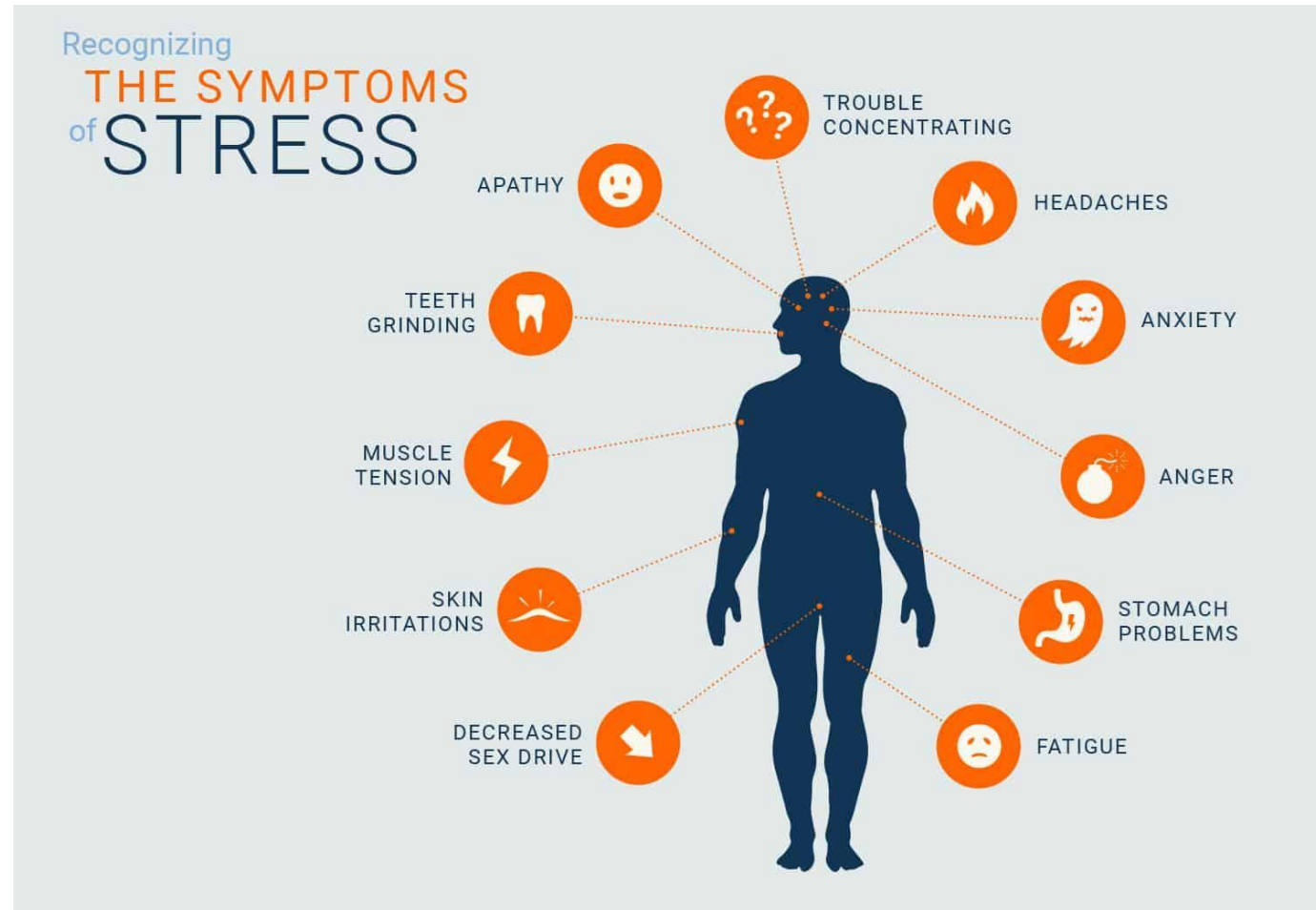
- The death of a spouse.
- Filing for divorce.
- Losing contact with loved ones.
- The death of a loved one.
- Hospitalization (oneself or a family member).
- Injury or illness (oneself or a family member).
- Abuse or neglect.
- Trauma.
- Separation from a spouse or committed relationship partner.
- Conflict in interpersonal relationships.
- Money Problems.
- Unemployment.
- Sleep problems.
- Children's problems at school.
- Legal problems.
- Others?

Examples of **positive** *personal stressors* include:

- Receiving a promotion or raise at work.
- Starting a new job.
- Marriage.
- Buying a home.
- Having a child.
- Moving.
- Taking a vacation.
- Holiday seasons.
- Retiring.
- Taking educational classes or learning a new hobby.
- Others?

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS?

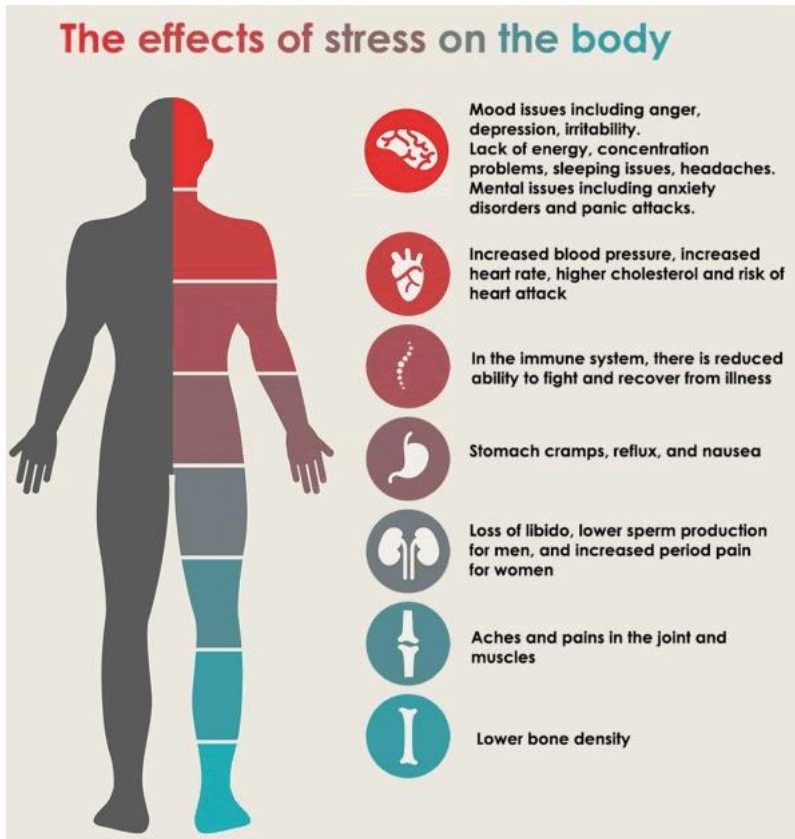
Stress comes in a variety of different forms and it affects everyone differently.










STRESS AFFECTS US IN MANY WAYS

Our bodies.

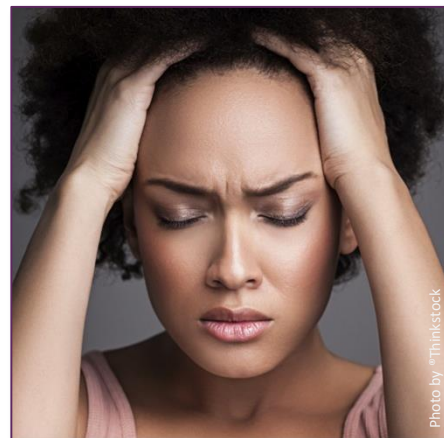
The effects of stress on the body



-  Mood issues including anger, depression, irritability. Lack of energy, concentration problems, sleeping issues, headaches. Mental issues including anxiety disorders and panic attacks.
-  Increased blood pressure, increased heart rate, higher cholesterol and risk of heart attack
-  In the immune system, there is reduced ability to fight and recover from illness
-  Stomach cramps, reflux, and nausea
-  Loss of libido, lower sperm production for men, and increased period pain for women
-  Aches and pains in the joint and muscles
-  Lower bone density



**Our behavior
and interactions.**



**Our thoughts
and feelings.**

THE EFFECT OF STRESS ON OUR BODIES

When we are stressed, our:

- Blood pressure rises.
- Breathing becomes more rapid.
- Digestive system slows down.
- Heart rate (pulse) rises.
- Immune system goes down.
- Muscles become tense.
- Sleeping can be more of a problem.

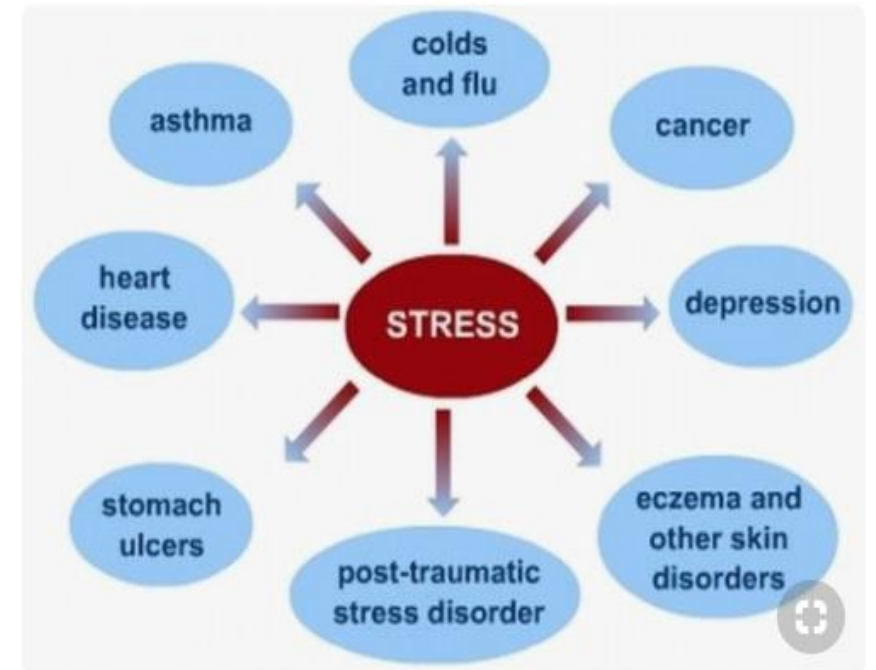
THE DANGERS OF STRESS.

AS TOO MUCH OF ANYTHING
CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS,
THERE ARE DANGERS OF
EXCESSIVE AND/OR LONG-
TERM STRESS..



COMMON STRESS-ASSOCIATED DISEASES

- Diminished Immunity
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Weight gain
- Hypertension
- Heart Disease
- Psoriasis/Eczema
- Digestive problems
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Alcoholism
- Substance abuse
- Insomnia
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Fibromyalgia
- Decreased sex drive
- Sexual dysfunction



NEGATIVE WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS.

Avoid Maladaptive Coping Mechanisms:

- Ignoring The Problem
- Alcohol and Drugs/Smoking
- Avoiding Others/Withdrawal
- Hopelessness
- Dwelling On The Negative (pessimism)
- Emotional Eating
- Anger Outbursts/Violence
- Resentment
- Negative Self-Talk
- Resistance
- Adaptation
- Blurring of Boundaries



GENERAL TIPS AND STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS

- Exercise—find what you like to do.
- Eat well and nutritiously.
- Talk with a friend or counselor.
- Get enough sleep.
- Keep up-to-date on vaccinations, such as flu shots.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs, and caffeine.
- Connect with nature.
- Make time each day to relax, laugh, and reflect.

MEDICAL / HEALTH EXAM

If you have been under a lot of stress for a long period of time, first things first:

- Go to the doctor for a complete physical exam
 - Blood pressure
 - Blood tests
 - Physical exam
 - Report any symptoms you have been experiencing



PROMOTE RESILIENCE FACTORS

- Positive Role Models
- Optimism
- Humor
- Moral Compass
- Altruism
- Religion & Spirituality
- Social Support



SOCIAL SUPPORT

- Social support has a profound effect on life expectancy
- People have better outcomes with strong social support, truly connected relationships
- Isolation/poor social support are associated with a poor stress response
- Few hardy individuals “go it alone”



EXERCISE



- Getting a workout isn't just good for the body. **Exercise releases endorphins**: feel-good chemicals.
- As a result, better sleep, reduced stress and anxiety, and increased happiness can come out of a workout.
- And if you just don't have time to go to the gym, you could even create your own **home fitness** centre.

Try experimenting with different exercises, such as:

- Jumping jacks
- Walking
- Running/jogging
- Swimming
- Hiking
- Dancing (e.g. zumba)
- Biking
- Kickboxing
- Walking your dog

SLEEP

- Getting enough sleep is critical to stress management.
- It literally resets & recharges your body and mind.
- Getting out of the RED zone in the stress performance curve requires sleep.
- Maintaining a regular practice of all other strategies will require sleep.

WHY IS SLEEP IMPORTANT?



cleaning the brain of toxins



physical restoration



information processing & memorization



mood regulation



strengthening immune system

TAKE TIME TO RELAX.

- Stress means that the brain and body are overstimulated.
- So allowing yourself downtime is important when dealing with stress.
- A high-strung, always-on-the-go lifestyle can increase stress levels and related symptoms.

Some ways you can relax include:

- Taking a long bath or shower
- Reading a **good book**
- Watching your favorite movie
- **Walking the dog**
- Or sitting outside and enjoying nature



MEDITATE.

- Meditation is one empowering mental activity to spiritually bring yourself back down to equilibrium.
- Meditating for just 10 to 15 minutes each day can help eliminate your stress and physical symptoms.
- Practice deep breathing exercises.



Everything on MINDFULNESS!

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present. During this state, we are aware of where we are and what we're doing. We are not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

Everyone can be mindful, and we can practice being mindful anytime and anywhere!

WHY BE MINDFUL?

Mindfulness has benefits including:

- Reduced racing thoughts
- Stress reduction
- Boosts working memory
- Higher brain functioning
- Increased clarity
- Lowered anxiety and depression



THE PRACTICE
OF MINDFULNESS
IS SIMPLY BEING
AWARE
OF WHAT IS
HAPPENING
right now.



PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- Develop an attitude of gratitude
- Start a gratitude journal
- Practice gratitude while you:
 - wake up, shower, walk to your car, walk to work, etc.



SPEND TIME WITH PETS.

- Did you know that spending time with your pets can be incredibly healing?
- Pets can actually improve our **mental and physical health**.
- Basically because when we stroke, play or spend some 'quality time' with our pets, our brains release happy hormones.
- These hormones don't just make us feel good - they actually reduce our overall stress levels too!



Decrease Screen Time

- Have boundaries with technology.
- Reduce notifications and alerts.
- Change settings on phone for technology curfew time.
- Charge your phone away from your bed.
- Don't sleep with technology.
- Reduce screen time 1-2 hours before going to sleep.
- Phone/device boundaries when having face to face contact (dinner table, social gatherings, etc).



**more
SOCIAL
LESS
MEDIA**

Use Technology for Stress Management Tools

Insight Timer



Insight timer is offering thousands of free playlists.

[Click here.](#)

Calm



[Click here](#) for free resources provided by the Calm App.

Headspace

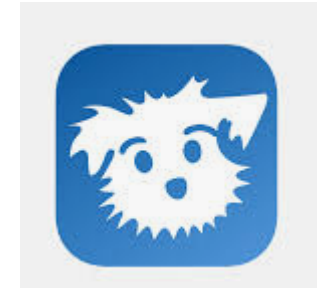


Headspace and the LA County Department of Mental Health have partnered to provide support and resources during this challenging time — all free through 2020.

[Click here](#) to sign up.

[Suscríbete aquí.](#)

Down Dog Yoga



The Mindfulness



How to Make the Most out of these Techniques

Start Somewhere.

- Focus on 1-2 techniques at a time.

Be Persistent.

- Aim to engage in it as often as possible.

Be Consistent.

- In order to be persistent, it helps to be consistent with your timings. Schedule it in your calendar.

Find The Techniques That Work For You.

- Finding relaxation techniques that you actually enjoy will increase the chances that you stay committed to your habits.

Optimize Your Environment.

- Practicing these techniques in a quiet, peaceful setting with minimal distractions will ensure that you get the most out of the time you spend.

REVIEW

- Stress is part of everyday life
 - It can promote growth and competency
 - If unrelenting or overwhelming it can cause adverse effects
- Adaptive coping enhances resilience
- Maladaptive coping skills cause additional problems
- Enhanced coping increases resilience while diminishing the adverse affects of stress, thus promoting health



HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT.

1-800-882-1341

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