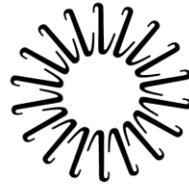


Stress Management



Lifespan Cardiovascular Institute

**Rhode Island Hospital • The Miriam Hospital
Newport Hospital**

Delivering health with care.®

Center for Cardiac Fitness

Cardiac Rehab Program

The Miriam Hospital

What is Stress ?

Stress is the anxious or threatening feeling that we experience when we interpret or appraise a situation as being more than our psychological resources can adequately handle.

(Lazarus, 1993).

What is Stress?

The wear and tear on our body, mind, and spirit brought about by our own reactions to the events of life. The stress response is the end result of the complex interaction between the individual and his/her world.

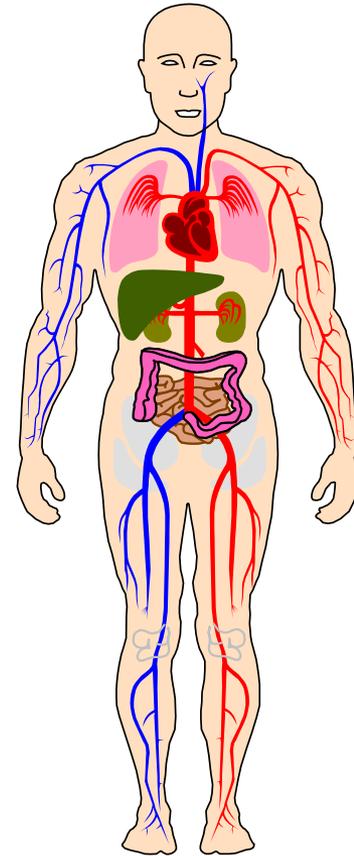
(Seskevich, 2007)

Stress and Cardiac Events

- Plumbing or circulatory problems
- Electrical or rhythm problems

Stress Response Systems

- Cognitive - - - - - ➔
- Emotional - - - - - ➔
- Physiological - - - ➔
- Behavioral - - - - - ➔



Physiological: “Fight or Flight” Response

- Adrenaline released
- Increase blood pressure & heart rate
- Increase breathing rate
- Increase in blood sugar
- Muscles become tense
- Release free fatty acids, triglycerides, and cholesterol into the blood stream

Cognitive

- Difficulty concentrating
- Trouble making decisions
- Inability to complete tasks
- Negative thoughts
- Loss of sense of humor

Emotional

- ◆ Anxiety, nervousness
- ◆ Depressed mood
- ◆ Irritability
- ◆ Anger

Behavioral

- ↑ alcohol, tobacco, drugs
- Changes in eating or sleeping
- ↑ nervous habits (e.g., nail biting, teeth grinding)
- Angry outbursts
- Avoidance of people/activities
- Reduced self-care

Stress is Universal

- What varies from individual to individual is:
 - The situations to which we are exposed
 - The events perceived as stressful
 - The way stress is experienced
 - The way we cope with it

Stress Management

A systematic approach to

- modify or eliminate stressors
- build personal resilience

➔ balance the stress in your life

➔ reduce the negative effects of stress



Grant me
the courage
to change the things I can,
the serenity
to accept the things I cannot, and
the wisdom
to know the difference.

Building Stress Resistance

- ◆ Personal control and responsibility
- ◆ Positive health habits
- ◆ Take breaks
- ◆ Social support
- ◆ Relaxation

Why is Relaxation Important?

- ◆ Reduces physiological arousal
- ◆ Improves mental clarity
- ◆ Gives you a time-out
- ◆ Reduces “stress”
- ◆ Promotes positive appraisal

Relaxation Techniques

- ◆ Breathing exercises
- ◆ Progressive muscle relaxation
- ◆ Meditation
- ◆ Imagery
- ◆ Positive self-talk

3 IMPORTANT POINTS

- Stress is multidimensional
- Stress can affect your heart
- How you think about stress and what you do with it affects how you experience it