

Stress affects us all and is a cause of mental and physical dysfunction



Stress is difficult to define because of its varied symptoms and experience for everyone. For example, a roller-coaster ride can cause anxiety for some but pleasure for others. The term 'stress', as currently used is 'the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change'. Many life events or tasks are not stressful because resources are available to complete them without difficulty. Good stress known as 'eustress' is advantageous when it motivates or increases productivity. Stress is detrimental when an individual is unable to negate stressors, be they: physical, chemical or emotional.

During stress, emotional and physical pathological symptoms can be experienced including: muscle tightness, stomach irritation, constipation, diarrhoea, sleep disorders, reduced concentration, irritability, reduced energy, headaches, neck pain, back pain, chest pain, heartburn, palpitations, increased blood pressure, hormonal and skin changes, weight alterations, depression and anxiety. Persistent stress can contribute to disease, including: heart attacks, stroke, kidney disease, diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome and arthritis.

The key to prevention is to take 'control of your health'. Use your chiropractor and other health professionals as resources assisting to identify and find strategies suited to you that will help you manage physical, chemical and emotional stressors in your life.

Incorporating a sound understanding of biomechanics and ergonomics, Chiropractic and Massage Therapy can be used to identify physical stressors and help relieve stress related symptoms such as muscle tightness, neck pain, back pain and headaches.

Techniques to help relieve stress

Relax: Try deep breathing, yoga, meditation, massage therapy, listening to soothing music and set aside at least 15 minutes daily to do something you enjoy.

Sleep: With appropriate sleep problems can be tackled more effectively.

Eat right: Fruits, vegetables, and proteins keep you alert and healthy.

Get physical: It helps relieve tense muscles, and releases endorphins that make us happy.

Talk to friends or a trained professional: Someone who will let you talk freely about your problems and feelings without judging you. If trained they can also teach effective coping techniques.

Do not deal with stress in unhealthy ways. This includes drinking too much alcohol, using drugs, smoking, or overeating.