Stress Less
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Stress Test

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

TENSE  STRESSED  EXTREMELY STRESSED
Today’s Agenda

- What is stress?
- Types of stress
- What are your personal stress reactions?
- Examples of behaviors to reduce stress
- Your stress-reducing action plan
- Resources
Stress Defined

Stress is a physical and mental response or reaction to a perceived challenge.
What are your personal stress reactions?
Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass, it’s about learning to dance in the rain. –Vivian Greene
Types of Stress

In your control
- Personal
- Financial
- Basic health

Out of your control
- World/traumatic events
- Injury/acute illness/New Baby
- Inherited conditions
Visualizing Stress
The Stress Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress Response (Sympathetic Nervous System)</th>
<th>Relaxation Response (Parasympathetic Nervous System)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>↑ heart rate</td>
<td>↓ heart rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ pulse</td>
<td>↓ pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓ blood vessel size</td>
<td>↑ blood vessel size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ blood pressure</td>
<td>↓ blood pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ shallow/chest breathing</td>
<td>↑ deep/abdominal breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓ digestive action</td>
<td>↑ digestive action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ muscle contraction/tension</td>
<td>↑ muscle contraction/tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓ skin temperature</td>
<td>↑ skin temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ release of stress hormones</td>
<td>↑ release of “feel good” hormones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑ preoccupied thinking</td>
<td>↑ rational thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stress Symptoms

- Migraines/unusual headaches
- Nausea
- Frustration and anger and fear
- Discouragement/Depression
- Loss of appetite
- Insomnia
Unhealthy Reactions to Stress

- Give up healthy habits/notice you are no longer doing things you enjoy
- Isolation
- Emotional reactions
- Feelings of guilt or shame
Behaviors to Reduce Stress: Work Toward Mental Wellness

- Healthy food choices
- Enough sleep
- Physical activity
- Time management
- Support network
- Relaxation
An affirmation is a statement of something you want, said in a positive way and as if it were already true.

“I am a great Mom and I am doing the best I can!”
The Relaxation Response
Take a one minute Time Out

- Slower heart rate
- Decreased blood pressure
- Slower, deeper breathing
- Relaxed muscles
- Normal digestion
- Normal skin temperature
- More rational thinking
Relaxation Techniques

- Deep breathing
- Visualization
- Belly breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Listen to relaxing music
- Meditation
Guided Imagery
What Does This Mean to You?

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.

–Viktor Frankl
How to Stress Less

- Make a “blessed” list
- Organize your time
- Take a Mommy time out
- Take a walk
- Deep breathing
- Muscle relaxation
- Meditation
- Ask for help
How to Stress Less

Professional help:

- Employee Assistance Program
- Individual counseling
- Support groups
- Health Education programs
Resources: Online at kp.org

- My Health Manager
- Health and wellness articles, healthy recipes
- Guided imagery podcasts
Resources: Coaching

- Check with your insurance company
- Kaiser Permanente Wellness Coaching by Phone: 1-866-862-4295
- HealthMedia® Relax® (online coaching on kp.org)
Resources: Kaiser Permanente

Health Education classes
- Mind-body
- Stress reduction and relief
- Depression
- Yoga

Reduced rates for members
- Massage
- Acupuncture
Resources: Community

- Local community colleges
- YMCA
- Local Department of Parks and Recreation
Stress Less and Thrive!

What will you do now to stress less?