

# **Stress Management & Physical Fitness**

## **Preface**

- ◆ This slide show titled 'Stress Management' is dedicated to my late father who expired at the age of 58 years after fighting with Diabetes for over 35 years. Although his life span was quantified by destiny, he led very cheerful life and remained active till his death. He managed his stress by keeping himself occupied in some activity or the other.
- ◆ His life philosophy still inspires & offers solution to me in case of need.

## **Stress?**

- ◆ S stands for sorrow.
- ◆ T stands for tension.
- ◆ R stands for rivalry.
- ◆ E stands for emotional outburst.
- ◆ S stands for success phobia.
- ◆ S stands for exit suspense.

## **What is Stress?**

- ◆ Most people find it difficult to define stress, yet they experience it often. Stress can be defined as an excessive demand on physical and mental energy, often leading to anger, anxiety, distress, fear, irritability and frustration.

## **Stress is the essence of life**

- ◆ Stress is the most common problem of urban people in developing countries.
- ◆ The word stress is derived from the Latin word 'stringere' which means 'to draw tight'
- ◆ There are two kinds of stress, based on physiological reactions: a) Positive stress prepares the body for action. The various factors responsible are joy, exercise, studies, and etc. b) Negative stress leads to anxiety and weakness. The various factors responsible are anger, frustration etc.

### **Causes of Stress**

- ♦ Stress is due to an 'imbalance' between the physical and mental levels.
- ♦ The most common causes of stress are as follows:
- ♦ 1) Prolonged physical or mental strain.
- ♦ 2) Death of someone close, personal crisis.
- ♦ 3) Job stress.
- ♦ 4) Failure in ambition.
- ♦ 5) Marriage problems.

### **Physical symptoms of Stress**

- ♦ Headaches
- ♦ Twitching eyelids
- ♦ Facial or jaw pains
- ♦ Dry mouth or throat.
- ♦ Swallowing problems
- ♦ Ulcers on tongue
- ♦ Neck pains
- ♦ Dizziness
- ♦ Backaches
- ♦ Weakness
- ♦ Constipation
- ♦ Indigestion
- ♦ Nausea & Vomiting
- ♦ Stomach pain
- ♦ Diarrhea
- ♦ Change in weight
- ♦ Skin problems
- ♦ Chest pains
- ♦ Heartburn
- ♦ Palpitation

- ♦ Frequent urination
- ♦ Cold hands & feet
- ♦ Excessive sweating
- ♦ Insomnia
- ♦ Excessive sleep
- ♦ High blood pressure
- ♦ Chronic fatigue
- ♦ Increased Allergies
- ♦ Frequent colds
- ♦ Rapid or difficulty in breathing
- ♦ Menstruation distress
- ♦ Swollen joints

### **Emotional Symptoms of Stress**

- ♦ Moodiness
- ♦ Depression
- ♦ Unusual Aggressiveness
- ♦ Loss of concentration
- ♦ Nightmares
- ♦ Frustration
- ♦ Anger
- ♦ Anxiety
- ♦ Inability to take decision
- ♦ Thoughts of suicide
- ♦ Lack of sexual interest
- ♦ Frequent episodes of crying
- ♦ Neurotic behavior
- ♦ Periods of confusion

### **Behavioral Symptoms of Stress**

- ♦ Nail biting
- ♦ Hair pulling
- ♦ Increased smoking
- ♦ Increased alcohol consumption
- ♦ Compulsive eating
- ♦ Compulsive dieting
- ♦ Foot & Finger tapping
- ♦ Wrinkling forehead
- ♦ Sudden change in social habits
- ♦ Chronic tardiness
- ♦ Grinding teeth

### **Physiology of Stress**

- ♦ Stress plays a dual role i.e. it has both a protective and a damaging affect. Stress leads to anxiety, which stimulates the secretion of hormones.
- ♦ The physiology of stress is explained below.
- ♦ 1) The body perceives the situation of stress.
- ♦ 2) The body chooses and prepares itself for 'fight or flight'.
- ♦ 3) Pituitary gland secretes stress hormone.

### **Physiological effect of stress on different organs of the body**

- ♦ Stress influences the body as a whole.
- ♦ 1) Cardiovascular system: Stress increases the cardiac output which makes the heart beat faster and harder. Reason-The hormone called 'cortisone' is secreted in the blood by adrenal glands, which directs the body to retain salt & water. This leads to more fluid in the blood circulation, which mean more loads on the heart.

- ♦ 2) Chronic stress leads to an increase in blood pressure. Physiological reason: Chronic stress leads to increase in cardiac output and arterial resistance.
- ♦ 3) Stress leads to a rise in cholesterol.
- ♦ 4) Stress for a prolonged time brings about changes in composition of blood, making it more susceptible to forming a clot, which can lead to 'cardiac arrest'.

### **10 Golden rules for stress management.**

- ♦ 1) Never say never
- ♦ 2) Act on facts
- ♦ 3) Never generalize
- ♦ 4) Accept your feelings.
- ♦ 5) Accept responsibility
- ♦ 6) Abandon false hopes
- ♦ 7) Step back from your problems
- ♦ 8) Simplify your lifestyle
- ♦ 9) Spend time with nature
- ♦ 10) Take decision with courage

### **5 Ways to conquer worry**

- ♦ 1) Refute the worry: Question your fear. How likely is it to happen? How many times have similar worries come to nothing?
- ♦ 2) Postpone your anxiety.
- ♦ 3) Face your fear: What's the worse that can happen? How likely is it? What would I do handle it? What can I do to prevent it or prepare for it?
- ♦ 4) Replace fear with concern.
- ♦ 5) If you can, just fix it. If something is out of your hands, worry is futile. If it is within your control, do something about it. Either way, worry adds nothing except more stress.

**Taking control of Worry.**

- ♦ 1) Distract yourself. Get busy with some form of physical pursuit or enjoyable activity.
- ♦ 2) Vent. Talk to someone, share your worries, and express your feelings.
- ♦ 3) Laugh. See if you can joke about what's worrying.
- ♦ 4) Try relaxation exercises.
- ♦ 5) Be philosophical. Tell yourself that whatever will be, will be.

**Easy Tips to overcome Stress**

- ♦ 1) Exercise
- ♦ 2) Deep breathing
- ♦ 3) Meditation
- ♦ 4) Relax
- ♦ 5) Diet
- ♦ 6) Hasta Mudras
- ♦ 7) Reflexology
- ♦ 8) Magnet therapy
- ♦ 9) Yogasanas
- ♦ 10) Music therapy
- ♦ 11) Hydrotherapy
- ♦ 12) Massage
- ♦ 13) Good sleep
- ♦ 14) Laugh
- ♦ 15) Vitamins

**Exercise**

- ♦ Light exercise helps to stimulate blood circulation to all organs. It also helps to relax the muscles. It increases concentration of blood and oxygen in the brain. Exercises help to build stamina of the body, which in turn helps to beat stress.

### **Deep Breathing**

- ♦ We begin to hold our breath when we feel upset. Breathing should be done slowly, softly and deeply. For better effect, one can do this by closing eyes. You should spend more time in exhaling than in inhaling.

### **Meditation**

- ♦ Meditation helps to keep the mind steady and calm.
- ♦ Surrender yourself to the Almighty Super power by whatever name called.

### **Relaxation**

- ♦ Relaxation helps to normalize the blood pressure and breathing pattern.
- ♦ It helps to distract the mind from all tensions, worries & problems.
- ♦ One should select relaxation activity as per choice and interest.
- ♦ Any activity other than one's usual activity can be called relaxation activity.e.g. Reading, playing, gardening, social work, exercise etc.

### **Diet**

- ♦ Liberal amount of fresh fruits and vegetables should be consumed.
- ♦ Lettuce or salad leaves have a sedative effect.
- ♦ Milk mixed with honey, if taken at bedtime also works as natural tranquilizer.
- ♦ One should chew 10 leaves of Holy basil (Tulsi) everyday for preventing stress.
- ♦ Coffee, soft drinks, salt, sugar, cigarettes and alcohol should be avoided.

### **Hasta-Mudras**

- ♦ Pruthvi mudra: Ring finger and thumb should touch each other. Benefits--It helps to achieve equilibrium between mind and the body.
- ♦ Meditation mudra: Thumb and first finger should touch each other. Benefits --It calms the brain.
- ♦ The above mudras should be done for minimum period of 15 minutes, twice a day.

### **Reflexology**

- ♦ Press your Thumb by either by thumb jimmy or by another hand. Benefits -- It helps to calm the brain.
- ♦ Exercise should be done by Acupressure Roller.

### **Magnet therapy**

- ♦ Small power magnet (curved) south pole (blue) should be kept on forehead between two eyebrows. Magnet should be kept for minimum period of 15 minutes, twice a day.

### **Yogasananas**

- ♦ One must do 'Shavasana' for 15 minutes. State of mind should be 'thought free'. You should concentrate on your breath at the time of doing 'Shavasana'.
- ♦ Pranayam should also be done every day, preferably early morning.

### **Music Therapy**

- ♦ One should listen to soft music whenever one finds himself in a tense mood.
- ♦ Whenever you are alone at residence in a depressed mood, one should invariably switch on to music.
- ♦ Relaxation tapes / CDs are readily available in the music shops.

### **Hydrotherapy**

- ♦ A hot water shower helps to restore the normal blood circulation.
- ♦ A hot pack to the spine at bedtime is also found helpful.

### **Massage**

- ♦ Lightly massage the tense muscles and do light workout to ease the tension of various muscle groups such as Feet, stomach, chest, back, hands, shoulders, neck, and head.

**Good sleep**

- ♦ Good sleep helps to relax the body and mind.
- ♦ Do not go to bed with some worry or tension in your mind.
- ♦ Try to go to bed and rise at the same time.
- ♦ Preferably wear loose cotton clothes while sleeping.
- ♦ Avoid Tea, coffee, and alcohol since evening.

**Laugh**

- ♦ If possible join Laughter club.
- ♦ Whenever you find yourself tense, try to enjoy healthy laugh.
- ♦ You should keep 'joke book' handy for use whenever need arises.

**Vitamins**

- ♦ The following vitamins have sedative effect on the body and brain.
- ♦ 1 B-complex
- ♦ 2 Calcium
- ♦ Bach Flower remedies also provide relief.

**Stress Level**

- ♦ In order to initiate action to monitor stress, it is essential to know the stress level. The subject is highly subjective and impact of same event on two persons will vary depending upon their personality. One way of measuring stress level is to look at the changes that have happened in one's life. Using the scale given below, add up the points for all the events that have happened to you in the last 12 months.

List of events & points

♦ 1 Death of spouse	100
♦ 2 Divorce	73
♦ 3 Marital separation	65
♦ 4 Prison punishment	63
♦ 5 Death of close family member	63
♦ 6 Personal injury or illness	53
♦ 7 Marriage	50
♦ 8 Loss of job	47
9 Marital reconciliation	45
10 Retirement	45
11 Change in health of family member	44
♦ 12 Pregnancy	40
♦ 13 Sex difficulties	39
♦ 14 Gain of new family member	39
♦ 15 Business readjustment	39
♦ 16 Change in financial status	38
♦ 17 Death of close friend	37
♦ 18 Change to different type of work	36
♦ 19 Changes in no. of arguments with spouse	35
20 Heavy loan taken	31
21 Repayment of loan	30
♦ 22 Change in responsibilities at work	29
♦ 23 Son or daughter leaving home	29
♦ 24 Trouble with in-laws	29
♦ 25 Outstanding personal achievement	28
♦ 26 Wife begins or stops work	26
♦ 27 Beginning or completing studies	26
♦ 28 Change in living conditions	25
♦ 29 Change in personal habits	24
♦ 30 Trouble with employer	23

31 Change in working hours/conditions	20
32 Change of residence	20
♦ 33 Change of college	20
♦ 34 Change in recreation	19
♦ 35 Change in religious activities	19
♦ 36 Change in social activities	18
♦ 37 Medium value loan	17
♦ 38 Change in sleeping habits	16
♦ 39 Changes in no. of family get-togethers	15
♦ 40 Change in eating habits	15
♦ 41 Enjoying vacation	13
42 Celebrating any function	12
43 Minor violation of law	11

♦ If your score is	Stress level
♦ Less than 150	Low
♦ 150 -- 249	Mild
♦ 250 -- 299	Moderate
♦ More than 300	Major

### **Expectations from viewers**

- ♦ If after viewing this slide show, it is expected that one should accept the existence of stress, find out his stress level and decide the strategy to overcome it.
- ♦ After all stress is a part of our life. It begins with our birth and ends with our death.
- ♦ **Compiled by Spandane.**