

Elks DRUG QUIZ SHOW



What is Stress?

Stress is a normal, natural, unavoidable feeling caused by the pressures of everyday life!

- **SOME stress is necessary and important.** In fact, it can actually be positive and helpful. Stress energizes us and keeps us on our toes! It helps us accomplish things which in turn makes us feel good about ourselves. It can also add excitement to our lives!
- **But TOO MUCH stress can cause “distress”** — making us feel miserable, sad, sick, and worried. It can even lead to anxiety and depression if we can't figure out healthy ways of handling it!



Is everyone paying attention?

So here's the real deal:

The challenge of stress is not whether or not to have it...
everyone does!

But rather whether or not we know
healthy ways of handling or “coping” with it!

HOW people deal with stress
can affect both their Health and Happiness.



What Causes Stress?

All kinds of things! But a major culprit is **CHANGE**. And one thing we all know for certain is that things never seem to stay the same!

Stress results from both good and bad changes in our lives. For example, both making the team and not making the team can cause stress.



Wow, that's news to me !!

Can you list at least 3 changes that have happened in your life in the last few years?



When you're done, see if any of these changes apply to you:

- Personal loss (such as the death of a person or pet close to you)
- Loss of friendship — through arguments or maybe moving away
- Illness or injury
- Money problems
- New job
- Acquiring step-brother(s) or step-sister(s)
- Siblings moving out, perhaps going to college
- Someone going to jail
- Job promotion
- Trouble at work
- Being fired
- Parents arguing
- Parents separating or divorcing
- Parent(s) remarrying
- New home
- New school
- New baby

Other Things That May Cause Stress:

Body Changes...



I'm so embarrassed!
Everyone is staring at me!

Schedule Overload...



Can I possibly juggle art lessons, ski club and baby-sitting class on Saturdays?

Too Many Expectations...



If I don't get an "A" my dad will kill me!

Frustration...



Where will I get the money to buy the sneakers I really want?

Communication Problems...



My mother never listens to me! No one does!

Peer Pressure...



I know I shouldn't go with them. But it's just so hard to say no...

Family Breakups...



Why are MY parents getting a divorce?

Also, Computer Glitches...

Environmental Disasters (think hurricanes, oil spills, or fires)...

Financial Insecurity (for example, parent being laid off or losing a job)

Indecision (not really knowing what you should do next)...

Possible Results of NOT Knowing How to Handle Stress

More Illnesses And Diseases...like colds, stomachaches, headaches, high blood pressure, ulcers, and even ♥ attacks.



Decreased Interest In School...



Use Of Alcohol Or Other Drugs...



Eating Disorders...



Arguments With Family And Friends...



Being Dissatisfied With Yourself...



Feelings Of Depression...



Remember!

Negative reactions to stress are common. But there **ARE** better ways to cope! To find out more, read on.

Coping Strategies

(or Positive Ways to Handle Stress)

While there's no magic formula for handling stress, there are **LOTS** of positive ways to cope. Start by smiling and laughing more. Laughter refreshes the spirit, eases muscle tension, and helps the body fight disease. It truly is the world's **BEST** stress reducer! Next, accept the fact that, much as you might like to, you can't possibly control every situation. After that, try one (or more) of the following suggestions:



WORK IT OFF!

If you're angry or upset, do something physical. Running or riding a bike can help burn off "nervous energy," relieve muscle tension, and release brain chemicals that can lead to a more relaxed or natural feeling of happiness.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY!

If you are tense, have a headache, or a pounding heart...your body is telling you that you've had enough. So **SLOW DOWN!** Also make sure you 1) get enough sleep as even small problems can seem **HUGE** when you are overtired, and 2) eat right. Healthy food and plenty of rest **WILL** make you feel better! Promise!



TALK IT OVER!

When things get tough, share your feelings with people you trust and respect! Turn to family, friends, coaches, counselors, or teachers. They care, so chances are they'll listen. They can even offer sound advice, a shoulder to lean on, a

hug, or another way of looking at a problem. Really "connecting" with someone else can feel especially good.

More Ways to Handle STRESS!

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE!

Don't just sit there! Call a friend, find something interesting to do, visit someone, learn something new, write a letter, check out what's going on around town, join a club, or do anything else safe that sounds like fun!



DO SOMETHING NICE FOR OTHERS!

Doing something nice for someone — no matter how small — makes both of you feel great!



BALANCE WORK AND PLAY!

And remember to take breaks, especially when you are busy! Doing something you like, such as reading a book or playing soccer, helps clear the mind, relax you, and give you new energy!

AVOID MEDICATING YOURSELF!

Don't rely on alcohol, cigarettes, or other drugs to help you cope. Rely on yourself instead!





What do you think
about THESE suggestions?

THINK POSITIVELY!

Tell yourself —

- * I am special **★★**
- * I can take care of myself.
- * Mistakes really are opportunities for me to learn and grow.
- * I do better work when I start things on time instead of at the last minute.
- * I know I can figure out a better way to deal with this situation.
- * I'm not the cause of other people's problems.
- * I can love my parents without taking sides.
- * I can talk to friends, teachers, and counselors..... even ask for help if I need it.



Always remember:

YOU are in control! You can handle it!
You **CAN** manage your own stress!



LEARN TO RELAX!

Relaxing is healthy, and there are lots of ways to do it!

Here are a few suggestions:

- Take a warm bath.
- Rent a funny movie and laugh a lot!
- Be creative. Try something new — cooking, sketching, gardening, dancing.
- Read..... or listen to your favorite music.
- Find a private place to go and dream!
- Do anything safe and healthy that makes you feel relaxed!

Importance of Relaxation

You can't be tense and feel relaxed at the same time! So...if you can learn ways to relax (especially in difficult situations), you won't feel as uncomfortable, anxious, or "stressed out." Try and learn more about the following strategies that can help both young people and adults relax. Besides being helpful, they are all simple, free, and convenient to use.



- **THE 4-7-8 BREATHING TECHNIQUE**

Sit comfortably, place your tongue on the roof of your mouth right behind your front teeth, and exhale noisily through your mouth. Then inhale quietly through your nose for 4 counts...hold your breath for 7 counts...and exhale through your mouth for 8 counts. Repeat the inhaling — holding — exhaling process three times.

- **REHEARSAL STRATEGIES**

Not knowing how to respond in a given situation (like receiving a note about having to meet with the principal the next day) can be especially stressful. With someone you trust (such as a parent, sibling, or friend) rehearse in advance the different ways you might respond. Roleplaying (that means acting out) different options and figuring out which ones work best can not only clarify your thinking, but also decrease anxiety and increase self-confidence.



- **MEDITATION**

Sit up straight, count slowly, and take about 30 deep breaths. During each one, fill the abdomen first, followed by the rib cage. Then give your mind a needed "break" by trying to focus on only one word or image. If your mind begins to wander, don't despair. Just gently bring it back to the word or image you've selected.

continued...

More Ways To Relax...



GUIDED IMAGERY

TREAT YOURSELF to a free, mini, mental vacation! Visualize (that means imagine) a scene you find particularly restful. Maybe sitting on a quiet beach or taking a long leisurely walk through the woods. Then try truly sensing (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling) ... and enjoying ... ALL of the details. Strange as it sounds, picturing a peaceful scene in your MIND can actually result in corresponding relaxing physiological changes in your BODY. And just like with most things in life, the more you practice, the more effective this technique will become.

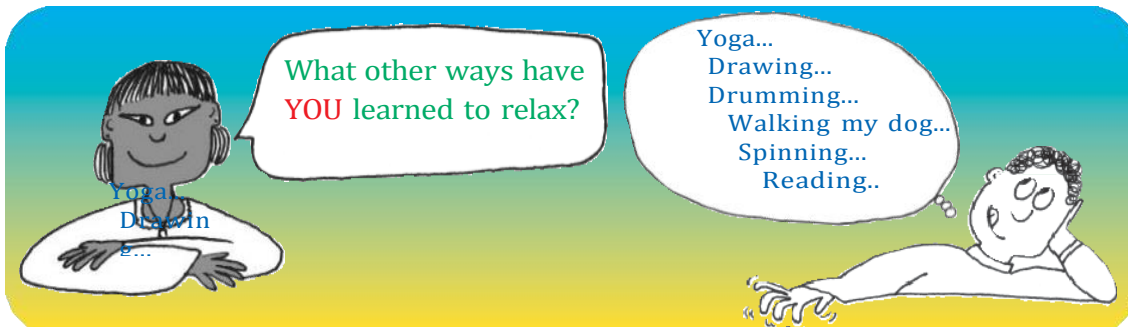


STRETCHING EXERCISES

"Muscle tension" is an automatic physical response to stress. And stretching loosens tight muscles. This, in turn, helps combat stress as the body can't be both relaxed and tense at the same time.

RELAXATION EXERCISES

Systematically tighten sets of muscles or body parts (such as thighs or fists) for 8 to 10 seconds. Then suddenly release them. Inhale deeply as you tighten the muscles. Exhale slowly as you release them. Doing this helps calm the body as it forces muscles to relax.





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