



FACTS ABOUT STRESS

Jorge Hané®

The International Weight Loss Guru®

1. It contributes to weight gain.

Nearly 70 percent of us are overweight or obese — an increase of 15 percent over the past 10 years! Is it stress? Quite possibly. Medical research shows that our bodies react to stress by releasing the “stress hormone” cortisol. When our adrenal glands produce too much cortisol under stressful situations, we may develop weight gain, especially around the abdomen, commonly called “belly fat.” This happens when the over secretion of cortisol moves fat from storage deposits that are more easily burned off and relocates it to fat cell deposits deep in the abdomen. Remember, exercise not only burns calories, it can be a great way to beat stress.

2. It makes you sick.

Stress doesn't just rule our thoughts. It delivers a crushing blow to our bodies, weakening the immune system and making us more susceptible to disease and illness. Medical experts agree it's not all in our heads. “The mind clearly can have a profound effect on every aspect of physiological functioning,” says James Gordon, M.D., Director of the Center for Mind-Body Studies in Washington, DC. “Individuals who are chronically pessimistic, angry or anxious are clearly more susceptible to illness, including heart disease and cancer.” Just as important as controlling your stress levels is making sure your body is getting the nutrition it needs to beef up your internal defenses.

3. It hurts your head.

“Stress headaches” can be caused by changes in the way the brain interprets pain signals from the muscles in the head, neck and shoulders that are under more strain when we're stressed. This tensing of the muscles can result in headaches and even migraines. If you feel as though you're worrying too much about certain things in your life, take a time out. Clear your head. It's a heck of a lot better than spending the next three days in your bed with the curtains closed and the lights off. Focus on relaxing techniques — and give your head a break.

4. It makes you moody.

Individuals coping with stress can become very temperamental and often suffer from mood swings. That's because when we are experiencing considerable stress, our bodies are physically depleted and we have less energy available to handle even ordinary hassles and tasks, which fuels irritability. Studies show that when our energy levels are exhausted from stress we become less sociable, more withdrawn and are likely to demonstrate moody behavior.

5. It keeps you awake.

Stress is the leading cause of sleep deprivation. It's easy to lose several hours of valuable sleep tossing and turning in bed as we worry and analyze all the problems we're dealing with. Beyond the obvious fallout of too little sleep – next day drowsiness there are several other consequences. These include lack of focus, short-term memory loss and impaired ability to drive a motor vehicle, just to name a few.



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