


Stress Management

The Center for
Excellence in Teaching,
Learning and Advising



What Causes Stress?

- Stress is caused by our perceptions of and reactions to the situations that occur in our lives.

Stress Symptoms

- The symptoms of stress are our physical, emotional, and behavioral reactions to life's situations.

Levels of Stress

- Levels of stress are categorized as acute, episodic acute, and chronic. Stress symptoms are often indicative of the level of stress.

Acute Stress

- Acute stress is the most manageable type of stress—heart rates jump, blood pressures rise, and tension headaches may ensue. We become momentarily angry, elated, boisterous, or resentful, and we cry in joy, in relief, or in frustration. Then the moment passes, and we go on about our business.

Episodic Acute Stress

- Symptoms such as recurring headaches, indigestion, fatigue, and insomnia are vivid warning signs of episodic acute stress. We can avoid episodic acute stress by recognizing its warning signs and coping with stressful situations as they occur. Without attention, this type of stress can lead to chronic stress.

Chronic Stress

- Unfortunately, once stress becomes chronic, long ignored symptoms become invisible. Grinding teeth, tremors, confusion, forgetfulness, over-eating, and alcoholism are just some of the symptoms that appear to be habits but are sometimes as unbreakable as the situations that caused them.

Effects of Stress

- The consequences of stress include specific disorders of both mind and body. In addition to raising levels of the stress hormones, adrenaline and corticosterone (lately much talked about as cortisol), a build up of stress can cause headaches, digestive problems, eating disorders, insomnia, fatigue, and lower the body's resistance to other illnesses such as colds and flu.

Stress Management Tips

- Get a good night's rest.
- Eat healthily.
- Listen to your favorite music.
- Exercise, participate in a sport or engage in a fun activity.
- Plan out your time and prioritize.
- Talk to a friend about your problems; don't hold it in.
- Get a massage.
- Take a nap.
- Take a warm bath.
- Read a book or watch TV.