

Stress Relief for Women
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Facts:

- ❖ Women live longer than men, but have higher rates of illness
- ❖ Individual personality traits determine reaction to stress which effects the immune system
- ❖ A study in 2000 found 4 major stressors: finding time to relax, financial worries, home responsibilities, and changes in work responsibilities.
- ❖ This same study found that the stressors with the greatest effect on women were: loss of spouse or family member or friend, financial issues, and recent change in living conditions.

Frequent stress symptoms:

- ❖ Neck or shoulder aches
- ❖ Sleeping problems
- ❖ Tension headaches
- ❖ Joint and back aches
- ❖ Upset stomach or indigestion
- ❖ Anxiety, nervousness, tension, crying
- ❖ Feeling sad, depressed, or unhappy
- ❖ Inability to relax
- ❖ Feeling overwhelmed with responsibilities
- ❖ Feeling angry or annoyed

Balancing Strategies:

- ❖ Realize that sometimes things are out of control, so worrying is a waste of energy
- ❖ Exercise
- ❖ Get your mind on something enjoyable such as reading, talking to a friend, shopping, yoga, etc.
- ❖ Ask for help
- ❖ Time management (prioritizing a “To Do” list-make one each night, then review it each morning. If you don’t get everything done, add it to the top of the next day’s list)
- ❖ Learn to make quick decisions rather than agonizing over things
- ❖ Learn to say no (stop trying to please everyone all the time)

Resources

Kenney, Janet W., Bhattacharjee, Anu, July 2000. Interactive model of women’s stressors, personality traits, and health problems. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 32, 249-259.

Setliff, Stephanie, October 2004. Multitasking Women Need Better Balance. USA Today Magazine, 133, 14-15.

Thomas, Jane, May/June 1999. Making Time for Yourself When You Work All The Time. Women in Business, 51, 18.