

just health

Basic tenets of stress physiology, part two

In part one, Dr. Bailey discussed what stress is and how it alters the body's normal level of activity. Part two covers some of the things that one can do to minimize the effects of stress on one's life.

BY STEVEN BAILEY, N. D.

Immune strength and stress: Over forty years ago western science had shown that stress impairs the immune system. Stress has shown to decrease size of the thymus gland (the principle gland producing T lymphocytes) as well as decreasing the number of lymphocytes (the involved cells in AIDS) and eisonophiles (the cells that work with parasitic infection and allergies). Certainly we can see what we need to attend to stress management in working with immune-related conditions.

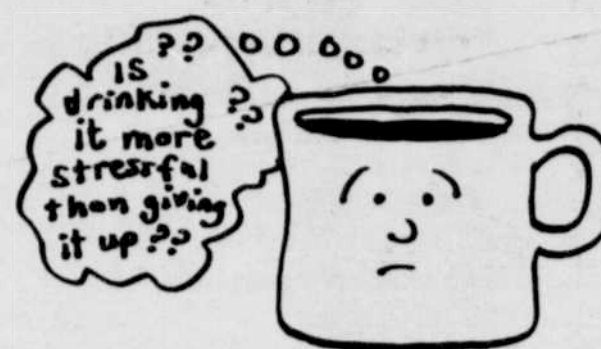
Most of us have seen within our own lives the relationship between periods of high stress and catching a flu or getting a cold. And while we may accept these relationships, many of us do little to aid our immune strength during high stress. My recommendations are as follows:

Assess your stress: Are there things that you can influence to lessen the impact of stress? Stress management techniques as well as communication and/or counseling may be of benefit her.

Reduce stimulants: While you may be feeling a momentary "high" from coffee, chocolate, black tea, sugar and even many "stimulatory" herbs you are still artificially altering your body's response to stress.

Consider your diet: Particularly if you discover that you are not eating well with your stressful life, you may find a great need for additional supplementation; vitamins and minerals that are known to be involved in healthy immune activity include: Vitamin C, B-6, vitamin A (although beta-carotene as non-toxic form of vitamin A is a much better way to provide long-term support), bioflavonoids, and the minerals zinc and magnesium.

Minerals should normally be taken at a level that is close to the RDA, but the levels of vitamin C, bioflavonoids, B-6, and beta-carotene can be raised well above the RDA level for best support. We have seen in AIDS patients that the more depressed their system is, the more vitamin C can be given without the diarrhea seen at levels exceeding 15,000 mg per day. Cer-



tainly the previously recommended daily level of 2,000 mg. is a moderate level of support for the immune system. B-6 should be taken with other B vitamins to diminish the chance of ill-effect. 100 to 200 mcg. per day may help to decrease inflammation.

Manage your stress: There are many things that we can do to minimize the impact of stress on our lives. Exercise in itself is of tremendous help, but again done within moderate limits. If you internalize stress there are many excellent ways to help let go. Bio-feedback, relaxation, meditation, prayer are all excellent adjuncts to letting go of stored stress. Counseling may help you develop better understanding of your stresses and your response to them. Massage, recreation and fun may all help to modify your stress. So relax, understand how important your good health is and the value of prevention and take better care of yourself. You deserve it!

Nutrition and stress: There is a need for increase levels of nutrition in the high stress individual. This is compounded by

the fact that the body is often not digesting well in the first place. Sometimes digestive enzymes can be as beneficial as relaxation and stress management techniques. When we are under stress, we often crave stimulants such as sugar and coffee because these are both more easily digested than fats and protein as well as being substances that immediately add fire to the burning candle.

Some of the primary nutrients that are used up more quickly in stressed individuals include the "B" complexes (B-1, B-2, B-3, pantothenic acid and choline), vitamin C, fat soluble vitamins E and A (do not experiment with high levels of fat soluble vitamins, consult an informed physician) and linolenic acid (one of the two forms of essential fat). In addition, the type of fat known as E.P.A., which is found in salmon and other fish, is known to buffer many of the cardiovascular ill-effects of stress and high fat diets.

The over-the-counter "B-stress formulas" are often adequate for most peoples' needs. Vitamin C is well-tolerated at high levels in most individuals. Some people, .5%-3%, have shown an increased tendency for calcium oxylate stone formation [kidney stones] at 15,000 mg. per day. Stone formation can be avoided with a buffered C or with much lower dosage. I am comfortable with 2,000 mg. a day as a sensible supplement to high-stress individuals. Please consult an informed source as to your vitamin A and E needs.

DO CONDOMS STOP THE SPREAD OF AIDS?

Researchers at University of California-San Francisco recently proved that condoms can greatly reduce the risk of spreading or contracting AIDS. Research had previously shown that condoms can stop gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes simplex and CMV viruses. And now we know that condoms can definitely stop the AIDS virus as well.

Anal intercourse without a condom is probably the riskiest sexual activity you can engage in.

Epidemiologists believe this is the most common way of transmitting the AIDS virus. The anal canal contains almost no immunological defenses. Human anal tissue is richly supplied with blood vessels and is surprisingly fragile. Small tears open tiny paths to the bloodstream. The passive partner is exposed to preseminal fluid, which may contain the virus, and to semen, a fluid that can transmit large quantities of the virus.

Active partners aren't safe either.

People who were exclusively "tops" have contracted AIDS, just as they have contracted other sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis and gonorrhea.

Condoms can stop the virus.

Anal sex with a condom is still

UNSAFE SEX PRACTICES

Anal Intercourse Without Condom

Rimming

Fisting

Blood Contact

Sharing Sex Toys or Needles

Semen or Urine in Mouth

Vaginal Intercourse Without Condom

considered "possibly safe." Condoms can break. Condoms may fall off. It takes some practice to use them correctly. But properly used, condoms drastically reduce your risk of spreading or contracting AIDS in anal (or oral) sex.

"But condoms reduce sensitivity!"

Condoms don't reduce sensitivity so much as they change the sensation. Many people learn to enjoy it, some prefer it. Others like the longer-lasting effect.

"But condoms are embarrassing!"

Condoms are embarrassing only because they're a new and different

aspect of our changing sexuality during this epidemic. Condoms can easily become just another erotic toy. Condoms are inexpensive and readily available. You'll quickly get over your embarrassment. Learn to use them.

"But if I haven't gotten AIDS yet, I must be immune!"

There is no medical justification for the idea of an immunity to the AIDS virus. It's just wishful thinking. The extent of re-exposure to the virus may make the difference between being infected without becoming ill, and actually coming

down with AIDS. Besides, what about your partner's health? Or our community's health?

Properly used, condoms effectively reduce the risk of contracting or spreading disease for both active and passive partners. Anal intercourse without them is far too dangerous for both partners.

Let's end all Unsafe Sex practices in Portland until this epidemic is over.

Let's protect one another. There may be nothing we can do about our past. There is a great deal we can do about our future. Let's stop the spread of this disease in our community.



408 S.W. Second Ave.
Suite 420
Portland, Oregon 97204
(503) 223-5907

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