



Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey N.D.

Stress management

We all experience stress on a daily basis. We experience it in physical, emotional and mental activities. How we individually respond to our stresses can dramatically influence our health and well-being.

Some forms of stress, such as exercise may improve our overall health, yet when stress exceeds our ability to respond to its effects our own health will weaken. Stress is defined in Dorland's Medical Dictionary as "the sum of all non-specific phenomena elicited by adverse external influences including damage and defense." Early symptoms of inadequate response to stress may include many of the following: fatigue, nervous irritability, exhaustion, tension, endocrine imbalances, increased susceptibility to infections, digestive disturbances (including loss of appetite) and anxiety.

Many people think of stress in terms of negative events such as a death in the family, illness, work deadlines, examinations, etc., yet positive events such as promotions, a new home, marriage, etc., may often be equally stressful. Stress is ever-present, and while we can work to minimize or prevent unnecessary stress, our own ability to respond to stress is an important component of good health.

Our individual responses to stress

vary considerably, but on a chemical level the body's responses to stress follow a fairly common pathway. Initially the chemical response to stress is the release of increased hormones from the adrenal glands. These hormones activate the "fight or flight" response of the sympathetic nervous system. As the sympathetic system influences our internal chemistry, our "fight or flight" response leads to an increase in energy and a depression of the normal functions of digestion. This short term increase in energy is similar to burning the candle at both ends (while we feel a subjective

increase in energy, we are actually using stored energy with an eventual loss of reserves and the onset of fatigue, etc.). While this short-term increase in energy serves to save lives in acute emergencies, those individuals who inadequately respond to stress on a daily basis face an eventual crisis related to the depletion of our stored energy and the damage inherent with the effects of stress.

Stress management programs are emerging nearly as fast as our awareness of the ill effects of stress. Current areas of stress management include exercise, bio-feedback, nutri-

tion, relaxation and meditation. Moderate exercise is very important to prepare your body for physical as well as emotional stress. It must be stressed that exercise to the point of exhaustion is not beneficial. Your exercise program should be at a level that allows your energy level to return shortly after the completion of the work. As I've said in earlier articles, begin with slight increases in time and amount of exercise rather than a sudden intense change in activity level.

Nutrition plays an essential role in a number of stress related functions. Vitamin C is helpful in supporting the

adrenal function, the B vitamins are needed for energy production and carbohydrate metabolism, B6 is helpful in adrenal-inflammatory conditions. Muscle tension may be helped with regular exercise and also with massage. As we hold our tension in our muscles, the circulation to these areas is diminished and stiffness and pain often result. Bio-feedback can help us to learn some of the subtle physiologic changes (skin temperature, skin tension, etc.) that occur with our responses to stress. Relaxation and meditation may serve to diminish the accumulated tension

and stress that we so often accept in our lives.

As we learn of "type A" personalities, and the associated increase in cardiovascular disease in these people, we can easily see the ounce of prevention's value in preventing future illness associated with the day-to-day management of stress. Type A personalities are only a small example of the detriments of unhandled stress. The benefits of exercise, good nutrition and stress management are far greater than most people realize, and definitely beyond the space afforded in this article.

Black nurses hold meeting

The National Black Nurses' Association, Inc. announces its Thirteenth National Institute and Conference, August 8-11, 1985, to be held at the Marriott's Pavilion Hotel, One Broadway, Downtown St. Louis, Missouri. The theme for the conference is "Health Care in the Year 2000: Impact on the Role of the Nurse."

The conference will address the socio-economic, political and cultural changes within the context of health care.

For further information contact: National Black Nurses' Association, Inc., Sadako S. Holmes, Executive Director, P.O. Box 18358, Boston, MA 02118 (telephone 617-266-9703).

N.E. health clinics to consolidate

The Health Services Division, Department of Human Services of Multnomah County announced today that remodeling has begun on a health center in N.E. Portland to replace two current locations.

The 18,600 square feet location at 5329 N.E. Union Ave., in the Walnut Park Building, will consolidate the current health clinic located at 5022 N. Vancouver Ave., and the Sabin Clinic located at 3601 N.E. 15th Ave. The remodeling is set for 120 days with a move-in planned for May 1985. Financing for the remodeling was arranged by Urban Equities, Inc. from Lincoln Savings and Loan, and the Portland Development Commission.

The Northeast area is the area of the county currently most in need of medical services to the poor. The two clinics can now handle approximately 2,350 visits per month. The new facility will permit an increase in visits due to more effective use of space.

Self-defense classes slated

The Portland Police Bureau's Sexual Assault Prevention program will offer its monthly, 9-hour "Woman-strength" self-defense classes in February at the following locations:

North: Tuesdays, February 5, 12, and 19, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., St. John's Community Center, 8427 N. Central.

Downtown: Wednesdays, February 6, 13, and 20, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Justice Center, 1111 SW 2nd, 14th Fl.

The classes are free and are available to women and girls age 13 and up. Those registering must be able to attend all three sessions of the class. Assertiveness is emphasized and survival level street-fighting skills are taught.

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<p>2-Pound Medium Cheddar</p> <p>Lucerne Premium Quality Cheese</p> <p>\$3.99 No Limit</p> <p>Save Up To \$1.40</p>	<p>40-Pound Blue Mtn. Dog Food</p> <p>Instant Mix Or Braised Chunks</p> <p>\$7.99 No Limit</p> <p>Save Up To \$5.00</p>	<p>Colgate Pump Toothpaste</p> <p>4.9-Oz. Regular Or 4.5-Ounce Gel</p> <p>\$1.15 No Limit</p> <p>Save Up To 40¢</p>

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