Observable Signs of Stress

- Inability to concentrate
- Feels of unreality, weakness or dizziness
- Floating anxiety
- Emotional tension
- Tendency to be easily startled
- Impulsive behavior
- Insomnia
- General Irritability/excitability/depression

- Hypermobility
- Sweating
- Headaches
- Pain in the lower neck or lower back
  - Loss or increase of appetite
  - Increased smoking
  - Increase alcohol and drug use
  - Nightmares
  - Neurotic behavior
  - Psychoses
  - Accident proneness
Organizational Stress

- Role ambiguity
- Role conflict
- Role overload
- Responsibility for people
- Relations with others
- Participation
- Job dissatisfaction

- Job tensions
- Job-related threat
- Low self-esteem
The Stressor Response

- Stressor---->Fight/Flight---->Strain---->Illness

- We inappropriately arouse the “fight or flight” response 50-200 times per day.
- Each reaction builds on the previous one until by the end of the day we have an elevated stress/tension level.

Source: The Relaxation Response, Benson, Herbert
Changes Our Bodies Go Through in the “Fight or Flight” Mode

• Slowdown of digestion occurs as blood is directed to the muscles and brain.
• Breathing becomes more rapid to increase oxygen for the muscles.
• Heart rate increased and blood pressure goes up rapidly, rushing blood to the muscles.
• Perspiration increases as a cooling mechanism, allowing the body to burn more energy.
• Anticipating action, the muscles become tense.
• Chemicals flow into the blood to assist clotting in case of injury.
• Fats and sugars are released to increase one’s energy.
What To Much Stress Can Do To You

Cardiovascular System
- Heart Attack
- Hypertension
- Angina
- Arrhythmia
- Migraine

Digestive System
- Ulcers
- Colitis
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Diabetes
Immunity System
• Infections
• Allergies
• Auto-Immunity
• Cancer

Skeletal-Muscular System
• Backache
• Tension Headaches
• Arthritis
• Accident Prone
Self Management Techniques

Good Nutritional Habits

• Balanced diet
• Sufficient vitamins, minerals, protein, complex carbohydrates and fiber
• Minimized consumption of sugar, salt, saturated fats, refined white flour and chemical additives
• Regular meals

• Maintenance of recommended weight
• Moderate use of alcohol and caffeine
• No smoking
Good Exercise Habits

• Regular aerobic exercise to improve cardiovascular fitness
• Regular recreational exercise for tension reduction and diversion

Self-Awareness

• Understanding of personal needs and preferences
• Assertive behavior and role negotiation
Letting Go Techniques
• Regular relaxation habits
• Seeking closure on tasks and interpersonal situations
• Finishing unfinished business

Personal Planning
• Effective time management day to day
• Life and career planning for the long term
Become Knowledgeable about Stress

• Understand the process and effects of stress.
• Identify your major sources of stress.
• Anticipate stressful periods and plan for them.
• Develop a repertoire of successful stress-management techniques and practice them.
• Learn to identify the opportunities for personal growth inherent in periods of stress.
• Find the level of stress that is best for you, remembering that both insufficient and excessive stress are potentially harmful.
Take a Systematic Approach to Problem Solving

- Define your problem more specifically.
- Gather information about the problem to put it in perspective.
- Discover why the problem exists for you.
- Review your experience with the present problem.
- Develop and evaluate a set of alternative courses of action.
- Select a course of action, and proceed with it.
Come to Terms With Your Feelings

• Differentiate between your thoughts and feelings.
• Do not suppress your feelings; acknowledge them to yourself, and share them with others.
• Learn to be flexible and adaptive.
• Honestly appraise your personal liabilities.
• Accept your feelings.
Develop Effective Behavioral Skills

• Do not use the word can’t when you actually mean won’t (for example, “I can’t stop smoking).
• Act on your decisions.
• Use free time productively.
• Avoid blaming others for situations.
• Learn to say NO.
• Deal with problems as soon as they appear.
Establish and Maintain a Strong Support Network

• Ask for help, and be receptive when it is offered.
• Develop empathy for others.
• List six people with whom you would like to improve your relationship.
• Rid yourself of dead or damaging relationships.
• Maintain high-quality relationships both on and off the job.
Develop a Style That Will Buffer Against the Effects of Stress

• Regularly practice some form of each of the following types of exercise: vigorous, stretching, and recreational.

• Engage regularly in some form of systematic relaxation.

• Use alcohol in moderation or not at all.

• Do not use tobacco.
• Obtain sufficient rest on a regular basis.
• Maintain your recommend weight.
• Eat a balanced diet.
• Take total responsibility for your life.
• Maintain an optimistic attitude.
• Do not dwell on unimportant matters.
Concentrate on Positive and Spiritual Development

• Adopt the attitude that no problem is too monumental to be solved.
• Engage regularly in prayer or mediation.
• Establish a sense of purpose and direction.
• Believe in yourself.
Plan and Execute Successful Life-Style Changes

- Expect to succeed.
- Approach projects one step at a time.
- Practice with change rigorously for 3 weeks; then decide whether to continue with it.
- Celebrate successes in your life; reward yourself.