

# Stress Management



**LEARNING SKILL COURSE  
DEPT. OF MEDICAL EDUCATION  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
OCTOBER 16TH**

# Stress Management



- Objectives of the session :
  - ✦ Define stress
  - ✦ Identify the types of stress
  - ✦ Recognize the mechanisms of stress
  - ✦ Identify the relation of stress and our health
  - ✦ Recall the stress management strategy
  - ✦ Conclusion

# Stress Definitions??



- **Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources.**

*(Richard S Lazarus)*



**If these capacities handle the demand and enjoy the stimulation involved, then stress is welcome and helpful.**

**If the capacities cannot handle the demand, then stress is unwelcome and unhelpful.**

# *STRESS AS A RESPONSE*



- **It results in certain physiological changes:**
  - **gastrointestinal,**
  - **glandular and**
  - **cardiovascular disorders**
  - **etc.**
- **It affects the entire body, not just a single part.**
- **Differences in response within and between individuals.**

# Stress

- Health professionals face many stressors in their work environment:
  - ✦ Sleep deprivation
  - ✦ Disruptions in social support
  - ✦ Clinical vs. educational conflicts
  - ✦ Caring for critically ill or dying patients
  - ✦ Certification or licensing examinations

***(French et al., 1982; Peterlini et al., 2002 )***

# stress



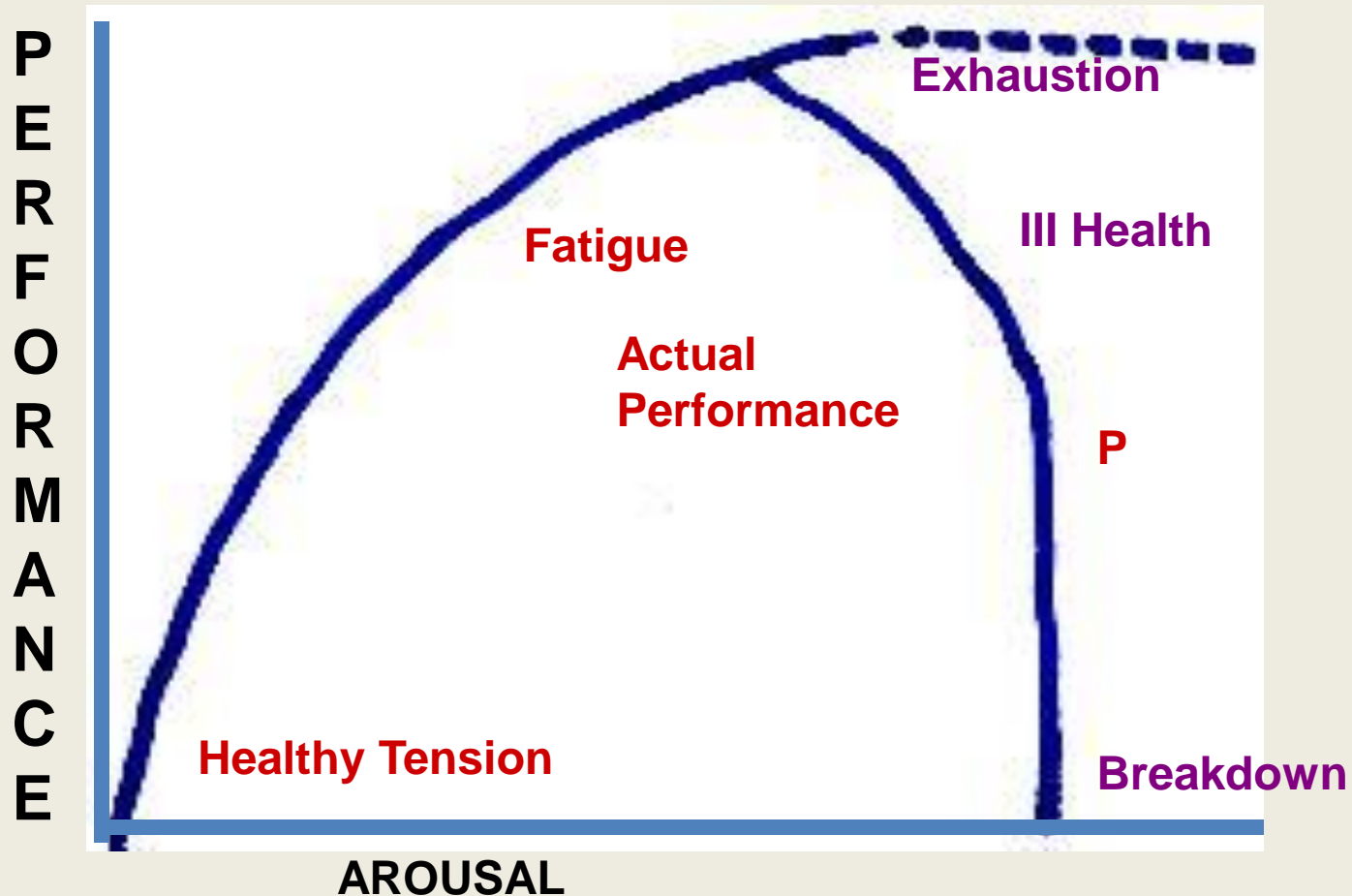
- Can be useful in enhancing performance & efficiency
- Can be harmful & negative especially when it becomes chronic & excessive

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the following content:

- Address Bar:** <http://www.mindtools.com/stress/UnderstandStress/StressPerformance.htm>
- Page Title:** Stress and the Impact of Stress on Performance IMI...
- Navigation:** Downloads, Links, References
- Sponsored Links:**
  - Free Communication Course
  - MindMapper 2009
  - Come live in Canada
- Main Content:**
  - Pressure & Performance – the Inverted U**
  - Text:** "The relationship between pressure and performance is explained in one of the oldest and most important ideas in stress management, the 'Inverted-U' relationship between pressure and performance (see below). The Inverted-U relationship focuses on people's performance of a task."
  - Text:** "The left hand side of the graph is easy to explain for pragmatic reasons. When there is very little pressure on us to carry out an important task, there is little incentive for us to focus energy and attention on it. This is particularly the case when there may be other, more urgent, or more interesting, tasks competing for attention."
  - Graph:** An inverted-U curve with 'Performance' on the y-axis and 'Pressure' on the x-axis. The peak is labeled 'Optimum Stress'. The area under the curve is shaded and labeled 'Area of Best Performance'. The left side is labeled 'Low Pressure Boredom' and the right side is labeled 'High Stress Anxiety Unhappiness'.
  - Caption:** "The Inverted-U relationship between pressure and performance"
  - Text:** "As pressure on us increases, we enter the 'area of best performance'. Here, we are able to focus on the task and perform well – there is enough pressure on us to focus our attention but not so much that it disrupts our..."
- Right Sidebar:** Includes an advertisement for 'www.IFOREX.com' and Arabic text: "تداول اسهم؟", "جرب التورينكس حرض", "خاص لظباء", and "www.IFOREX.com".

# HUMAN FUNCTION CURVE

Intended Performance



P = The point at which minimum arousal may bring on a breakdown



# Stress



Mechanisms of stress :

- Fight-or-Flight
- The General Adaptation Syndrome and Burnout

# Mechanisms of stress



- **Fight-or-Flight** (Cannon in 1932)
  - ✦ When an animal experiences a shock or perceives a threat, it quickly releases hormones that help it to survive.
  - ✦ These hormones help us to run faster and fight harder

# Mechanisms of stress



- Power, but little control :
  - ✦ it difficult to execute precise, controlled skills
  - ✦ We find ourselves more accident-prone and less able to make good decisions
  - ✦ Is easy to think that this fight-or-flight, or adrenaline, response is only triggered by obviously life-threatening danger

# General Adaptation Syndrome



**Stage 1**  
**Alarm Reaction**

**Stage 2**  
**Resistance**

**Stage 3**  
**Exhaustion**

Normal  
Level of  
Resistance



# *THREE STAGES OF ADAPTATION IN STRESS*

- 1. Alarm reaction:** when a person is exposed to an unadapted stimulus there is an initial shock (in which resistance is lowered) followed by a rebound reaction (counter shock phase) during which the organism's defense mechanisms become active.
- 2. Stage of resistance:** during this stage the person's full adaptation may lead to successful return to equilibrium.
- 3. Stage of exhaustion:** in case of failure of adaptability the organism becomes exhausted.

#	Question	Not at all	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very Often
1	Do you feel run down and drained of physical or emotional energy?					
2	Do you find that you are prone to negative thinking about your job?					
3	Do you find that you are harder and less sympathetic with people than perhaps they deserve?					
4	Do you find yourself getting easily irritated by small problems, or by your co-workers and team?					
5	Do you feel misunderstood or unappreciated by your co-workers?					
6	Do you feel that you have no one to talk to?					
7	Do you feel that you are achieving less than you should?					

<b>8</b>	Do you feel under an unpleasant level of pressure to succeed?					
<b>9</b>	Do you feel that you are not getting what you want out of your job?					
<b>10</b>	Do you feel that you are in the wrong organization or the wrong profession?					
<b>11</b>	Are you becoming frustrated with parts of your job?					
<b>12</b>	Do you feel that organizational politics or bureaucracy frustrate your ability to do a good job?					
<b>13</b>	Do you feel that there is more work to do than you practically have the ability to do?					
<b>14</b>	Do you feel that you do not have time to do many of the things that are important to doing a good quality job?					
<b>15</b>	Do you find that you do not have time to plan as much as you would like to?					
	Total =	52				

Score	Comment
15 – 18	Little sign of burnout here
19 – 32	Little sign of burnout here, unless some factors are particularly severe
33 – 49	Be careful - you may be at risk of burnout, particularly if several scores are high
50 – 59	You may be at severe risk of burnout - do something about this urgently
60 - 75	You may be at very severe risk of burnout - do something about this urgently



# Burnout – Cont.



- **Avoiding Burnout :**

- ✦ Too much to do, too little time

- Use the job analysis tool to see if you can cut away low-yield work

- Review your management of time

- Check that you are using all of the resources available to you.

# Burnout - Cont.

- **Avoiding Burnout :**
  - ✦ **Avoiding Exhaustion :**
    - Going on a good, long vacation is one of the best ways of avoiding burnout
    - Leave your laptop and mobile phone behind.
    - Rest, and enjoy life. Being a workaholic is not something to be proud of.
    - make sure you get enough sleep and rest

# Consequences of Stress



**Physiological**

Cardiovascular disease,  
hypertension, headaches

**Behavioral**

Work performance, accidents,  
absenteeism, aggression, poor  
decisions

**Psychological**

Dissatisfaction, moodiness,  
depression, emotional fatigue

# Stress and our health

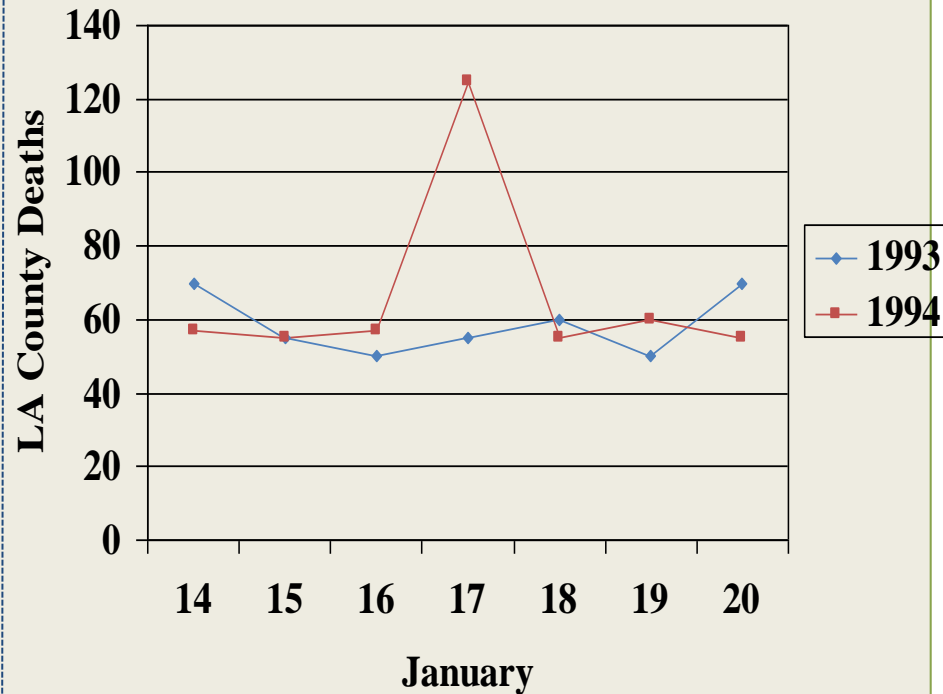


- **Stress and the immune system :**
  - ✦ Medical school examinations associated with decreases in cellular **immunity** and increases in proinflammatory and humoral immunity
  - ✦ increases in vulnerability to infectious disease as well as allergy
  - ✦ Life stress is associated with 2-fold increase in **susceptibility to the common cold virus**
  - ✦ Severe life stress is associated with a 4-fold increase in risk of **HIV progression** and 2.6-fold increase in **mortality**

# Stress and our health

- **Stress and the cardiovascular system**

- ✦ **Cardiovascular mortality** is tripled in this group (15%) compared to non-depressed patients (5%)



# Examination stress , how to handle it



- **Preparation:**

- Simple study routine , have a clear **plan of action**
- Adequate **early preparation**
- Regular and systematic **revision**
- **Practice (Mock exams)** as it would reduce anxiety

# Examination stress , how to handle it



- Time management ;
  - **Priority tasks** , evaluate how you are budgeting your time.
  - Set **achievable goals** keeping in mind your strengths and weakness
  - Make a **realistic schedule** and follow it through.

# Examination stress , how to handle it



- Motivation ;
  - Don't get discouraged' learn to appreciate your strengths
  - Learn from mistakes
  - Visualize success



# Examination stress , how to handle it



- Maintain confidence ;
  - look at yourself without any judgment
  - Resist comparisons , **don't compare yourself to other people** .compare yourself to the best you can do . In other words , compete within yourself.

Intervention to  
consider for stress  
management

```
graph TD; A[Intervention to consider for stress management] --- B[Time Management]; A --- C[Personal Management]
```

Time  
Management

Personal  
Management

# Personal Management



- **Two Anti-Stress Approaches :**
  - ✦ 4-Steps to Interrupting Stress
  - ✦ Relaxation Response

# Interrupting Stress – A 4 Step Approach



- **Stop**
  - ✦ Each time you encounter a stress...stop...before (automatic) thoughts escalate into worst possible scenarios.
- **Breathe**
  - ✦ After you stop, breathe deeply to release physical tension...most time one tends to hold breath in the midst being stressed...even a momentary interruption can help.
- **Reflect**
  - ✦ Focus energy on problem & reflect on the cause of stress
- **Choose**
  - ✦ Time to choose how to deal with stress

# Relaxation Response



- Pick a focus word, phrase, image, or prayer; or focus on breathing.
- Sit quietly in comfortable position.
- Close eyes & relax muscles
- Breathe slowly & naturally – as you do, repeat focus word or phrase as you exhale.
- When other thoughts come to mind, just go back to repetition of word or breathing.

# Stress management strategy



- **strategy #1 :Avoid unnecessary stress :**
  - ✦ **Learn how to say “no”**
  - ✦ **Avoid people who stress you out**
  - ✦ **Take control of your environment**
  - ✦ **Avoid hot-button topics**

# Stress management strategy

## • **Strategy #2: Alter the situation :**

- ✦ **Express your feelings instead of bottling them up**
- ✦ **Be willing to compromise**
- ✦ **Be more assertive**
- ✦ **Manage your time better**

# Stress management strategy



- **strategy #3: Adapt to the stressor :**
  - ✦ **Reframe problems**
  - ✦ **Look at the big picture**
  - ✦ **Focus on the positive**



# Stress management strategy



- **strategy #4: Accept the things you can't change :**
  - ✦ **Don't try to control the uncontrollable**
  - ✦ **Share your feelings**
  - ✦ **Learn to forgive**

# Stress management strategy



- **strategy #5: Make time for fun and relaxation :**
  - ✦ **Set aside relaxation time**
  - ✦ **Connect with others**
  - ✦ **Do something you enjoy every day**
  - ✦ **Keep your sense of humor**

# Stress management strategy

- **strategy #6: Adopt a healthy lifestyle:**
  - ✦ **Exercise regularly**
  - ✦ **Eat a healthy diet**
  - ✦ **Reduce caffeine and sugar**
  - ✦ **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs**
  - ✦ **Get enough sleep**

# Stress management strategy for a doctor



- **Stress due to**

- Night calls
- Administration
- Contact with dying
- Dealing with relatives
- Lack of recognition
- 24 hr cover

- **Solutions**

- Time management
- Decrease interruptions
- Decrease paperwork
- Good staff relationship
- Delegation
- Exercise
- Relaxation
- Protected time

# *CONCLUSION*



- **One third of the illnesses are caused by Stress, either directly or indirectly.**
- **If handled properly,**
  - Stress can help improve performance,
  - but too much stress without appropriate strategy to control it can be harmful for the mind and the body.

شكراً

THANKS