

## Chapter 10: Stress, Health, and Adjustment

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### Truth or Fiction?

- Some stress is good for us.
- Because variety is the spice of life, the more change the better.
- Going on vacation is stressful.

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### Truth or Fiction?

- Searching for social approval or perfection is an excellent way of making yourself miserable.
- Type A people achieve more than Type B people, but they are less satisfied with themselves.

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**Truth or Fiction?**

- Humor helps us cope with stress.
- At any given moment, countless microscopic warriors within our bodies are carrying out search-and-destroy missions against foreign agents.

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**Truth or Fiction?**

- If you have a family history of heart disease or cancer, there is little or nothing you can do to prevent developing the illness yourself.
- Blowing things out of proportion can give you a headache.

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**Preview of Chapter Ten**

- Stress
- Psychological Moderators of Stress
- Stress and the Body
- Psychology and Health

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## **Stress: What It Is, Where It Comes From**

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### **Stress**

- Demand made on an organism to adapt, cope, or adjust
- Eustress
  - Healthful stress
- Intense or prolonged stress
  - Affects our moods, impairs our ability to experience pleasure, and harms the body

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### **Health Psychology**

- Studies relationships between psychological factors and the prevention and treatment of physical health problems.

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### Health and Stress



PLAY VIDEO

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### Daily Hassles

- Regularly occurring conditions and experiences that can threaten or harm our well-being
  - Household, health, time-pressure, inner concern, environmental, financial responsibility, work and security hassles

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### Life Changes

- Differ from daily hassles in that life changes
  - Are often positive and desirable
  - Occur at irregular intervals
- Life changes, even positive ones, require adjustment

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### Hassles, Life Changes, and Health Problems

- Hassles and life changes predict health problems
  - Heart disease, cancer, even athletic injuries
- Limitations in the research
  - Nature of the links between stress and health problems
  - Positive versus negative life changes
  - Personal differences in handling stress
  - Cognitive appraisal of event

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### What Are the Relationships Among Daily Hassles, Life Changes, and Physical Illness?



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### Conflict

- Feeling of being pulled in two or more directions by opposing motives
- Four types of conflict
  - Approach-approach
  - Avoidance-avoidance
  - Approach-avoidance
  - Multiple approach-avoidance

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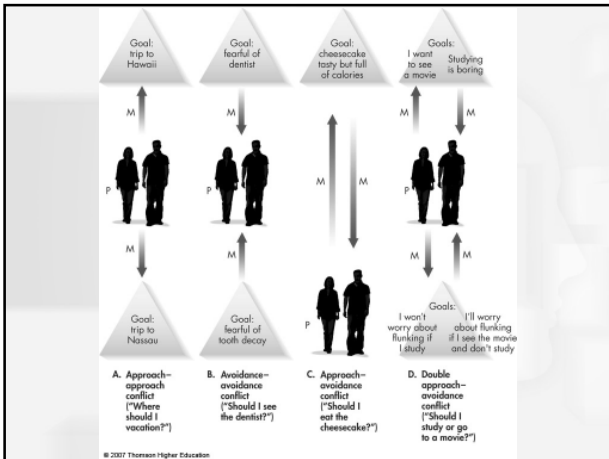
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### Irrational Beliefs

Activating event → Beliefs → Consequences

- Negative activating event becomes more aversive
- Irrational beliefs compound the effects
- Common irrational beliefs include high need for social approval and perfectionism

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### Type A and B Behavior Patterns

- Type A people are highly driven, competitive, impatient, hostile, and aggressive
- Type B people relax more readily and focus more on the quality of life; are less ambitious and less impatient

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## Psychological Moderators of Stress

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### Self Efficacy Expectations

- Allow one to persist in difficult tasks and endure discomfort
- High self-efficacy expectations – less adrenaline and noradrenaline secreted when under stress
  - Moderates body's stress

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### Psychological Hardiness

- Business executives were found to be
  - High in commitment
  - High in challenge
  - High in perceived control over their lives
    - Internal locus of control

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### Sense of Humor

- Research demonstrating value of sense of humor
  - Students who produced humor in stressful situations were less affected by the stress
  - Students who watched humorous videos enhanced immune system functioning

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### Predictability and Control

- Predictability allows us to prepare
  - Greater benefit to internals
- Control, even the illusion of control, allows us to plan

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### Social Support

- Multiple definitions
  - Emotional concern
  - Instrumental aid
  - Information
  - Appraisal
  - Socializing
- Shown to help people resist infectious diseases
- Helps people cope with stress of health problems

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## Stress and the Body: The War Within

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### General Adaptation Syndrome

- Group of bodily changes that occur in three stages
  - Alarm reaction
  - Resistance stage
  - Exhaustion stage

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### Alarm Reaction of the General Adaptation Syndrome

- Triggered by perception of a stressor
- Arouses the body
- Corticosteroids help protect the body
  - Combat allergic reactions and produce inflammation
- Adrenaline is released which provides fuel for the fight-or-flight reaction

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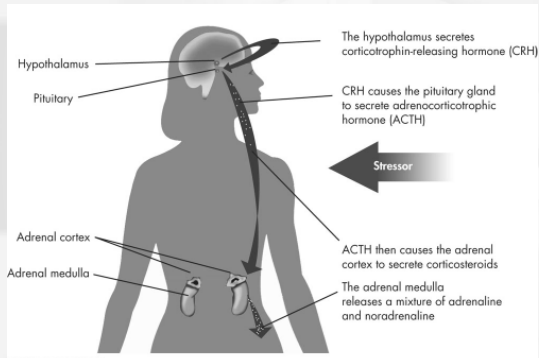
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### Stress and the Endocrine System



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### Alternatives to the Alarm Reaction

- Tend and befriend responses to threats
- Productive response by pulling back from the situation for reappraisal
  - Cognitive adaptation theory
  - Conservation of resources theory

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### Resistance Stage of the General Adaptation Syndrome

- If alarm reaction mobilizes the body and the stressor is not removed
- Endocrine and sympathetic activity continues higher than normal

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**Exhaustion Stage of the  
General Adaptation Syndrome**

- If stressor is not dealt with adequately
- Muscles become fatigued
- Parasympathetic division of ANS dominates
- Continued stress may lead to diseases of adaptation
  - Allergies, hives, coronary heart disease, ultimately death

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**Immune System**

- Immune system combats disease
  - Production of white blood cells (leukocytes) which kills pathogens
  - Remembering antibodies used to battle antigens
  - Inflammation – increases leukocytes sent to the injured area

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**Psychoneuroimmunology**

- Addresses the relationships among psychological factors, nervous system, endocrine system, immune system, and disease

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### **Stress and the Immune System**

- Stress depresses effectiveness of the immune system through the release of corticosteroids
  - Steroids interfere with the formation of antibodies
- Students shown to have lower immune system functioning during stressful periods of school year
  - Student with friends showed less suppression

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### **Video Connections: Health and Stress**

- Explain what happens to the immune system when a person becomes stressed. What is the role of cytokine?
- What are the sources of stress in your life? Your hassles? Your life changes? Conflicts?
- What can you do to reduce some of the stress in your own life?

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### **Psychology and Health**

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### **Biopsychosocial Approach to Health**

- Likelihood of contracting an illness can reflect the interaction of biological, psychological and sociocultural factors
  - Biological – Genetics – predispositions
  - Psychological – Attitudes, emotions and behaviors

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### **Tension Headache**

- Most frequent headache
  - Come on gradually
  - Dull, steady pain on both sides of head
- Contraction of muscles during GAS
  - Shoulders, neck, forehead, and scalp
  - Persistence stress – constant contraction

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### **Migraine Headache**

- Affects one in ten Americans
  - Characterized by sudden onset and severe throbbing pain on one side of the head
- Multiple triggers
- Type A behavior patterns contribute to migraines

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**Coronary Heart Disease**

- Risk factors
  - Family history
  - Physiological conditions
  - Patterns of consumption
  - Type A behavior
  - Hostility and holding in feelings of anger

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**Coronary Heart Disease**

- Risk factors (continued)
  - Job strain
  - Chronic fatigue, stress, anxiety, depression and emotional strain
  - Sudden stressors
  - Physically inactive lifestyle

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**Cancer**

- Major risk factors
  - Inherited disposition
  - Smoking
  - Drinking alcohol
  - Eating animal fats
  - Sunbathing
  - Stress

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