

USING EXERCISE TO HELP COPE WITH STRESS



Stress is everywhere. It can be helpful or harmful, depending on how you manage it. You can try to overcome harmful stress levels with:

1. Artificial measures e.g. medication, alcohol and caffeine or
2. Natural measures e.g. understanding your physiology, exercise, diet and sleep. Each approach uses chemicals. The second, relying on the body's natural powers and chemicals, is the method preferred by Chiropractors.

What is Stress?

Stress can be caused by more than just emotional problems. It can be caused by infections, allergies, extreme temperatures, environmental pollutants and exercise. Our body has a hormonal and nervous system response which helps us to deal with these problems.

Many emotional and physical disorders arise from the inability to mount this defence against stress rather than the stress itself.

What is the solution?

Firstly, manage your pressures from work and home. Minimise your stress by having plenty of rest and relaxation.

Our body is designed for gentle exercise on a daily basis. As most of us sit down all day, our muscles can become weak, if we do not exercise causing joint and back problems. When we do exercise, sometimes it is a frantic dash around a gym or a jarring run snatched from a busy schedule followed by days of inactivity. This may well increase the risk of back and joint and also heart disease, and other health problems.

Consider various stress reduction programmes such as tapes, books, yoga or meditation. Avoid or reduce alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, sugar and sugary foods, as these stimulate the already overworked adrenal glands. One of the best factors for naturally reducing stress is balanced exercise.



YOUR IDEAL HEART RATE! Anaerobic activity starts increasing when your heart rate rises to above 80% of its max. So exercise keeping your heart rate to between 60 – 80%. It is easy to calculate your maximum heart rate by deducting your age from 220. This is the ideal range that you need to keep to when exercising. Measure your heart rate by feeling your pulse at the wrist, in your neck, over your chest or with a pulse rate monitor available from sports shops.

Healthier Exercising

There are two types of exercise: aerobic and anaerobic.

1. Aerobic exercise releases stress-reducing hormones, burns fat and so reduces body weight, increasing your energy and sense of well-being. It is slower and repetitive with a low intensity e.g. walking, jogging, cycling or swimming.
2. Anaerobic exercise depletes energy by burning sugar for muscle energy, increases adrenalin and other stress hormones, raises blood pressure and causes tiredness after the exercise has taken place. It is brief and of high intensity, emphasizing speed or strength e.g. squash, lifting weights or sprinting.

Most exercise involves a combination of both. For instance, running gently can be aerobic but running fast can become anaerobic. It depends upon the exercise intensity and heart rate – the lower the heart rate, the more aerobic the exercise.



What exercise is best.

Any exercise which keeps your pulse rate within its 60-80% of maximum range. Ensure you exercise for at least 20 minutes (preferably 30-60 minutes) at least three times a week. It should be low impact, in other words not jarring to the body. e.g. running on pavements is more jarring than cycling or swimming. Exercise should be varied and any anaerobic exercise should be reduced in times of stress. Lunch time is a good time to exercise as it can prevent the build-up of stress throughout the day.

Remember to enjoy yourself. Your gym will work out a varied programme to not only keep you interested and motivated but also work on the major muscle groups. Swimming and cycling are also good for low impact exercises.



STRESS & CHIROPRACTIC.

Stress may result from a disturbance to the muscles, bones and joints. Chiropractic examination reveals muscle tension or weakness and poor joint function, related to the spine. If this persists, then cervicogenic headaches, migraine, neck and back pain may result. Preventing and correcting these disorders requires a team approach. As Chiropractors, our main responsibility is to correct the muscle and spinal function and their effects on the nerves related to the back. It is very important that you do your part too and follow our advice on diet, lifestyle and exercise.

We Care About You.

Please give this to a friend or colleague if you think Chiropractic may help them.

Have them call us on 01276 21637

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