STRESS REDUCTION

Healthy Living Program
What is stress?

- Physics: “Pressure or tension exerted on a material object”

- Life: “A state of emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances”
What are major sources of stress in your life?
How does stress make you feel?
Stress Response

- Stress causes body to release of hormones to return body back to homeostasis
- **Cortisol**: regulates blood sugar, immune system, memory formation
- **Vasopressin**: raises blood pressure
Why is stress good?

- Evolution – survival of the fittest
- Cognition – enhance learning and memory
- Immune – fight or flight (short term)
- Workplace – productivity and motivation
Why is stress bad?

- Long term stress leads to...
  - Compromised immune response
  - Impaired cognition
  - Decreased thyroid function
  - Increased abdominal fat
Now that we’ve discussed the health benefits and risks of stress…

How do you deal with stress?

Stress Reduction Kit

Bang
Head
Here

Directions:
1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.
4A’s of Stress Management

• **Avoid**
  - Learn to say “no”
  - Avoid stressing people
  - Take control
  - Avoid controversy
  - Decrease to-do list

• **Alter**
  - Communicate feelings
  - Compromise
  - Be more assertive
  - Manage time

• **Adapt**
  - Reframe problems
  - Look at big picture
  - Adjust standards
  - Focus on positive

• **Accept**
  - Don’t control the uncontrollable
  - Look for upside
  - Share your feelings
  - Forgive

• **Stress reduction techniques**
Dealing with Stress

Unhealthy

• Smoking
• Drinking too much
• Withdrawing from family
• Taking unnecessary pills
• Procrastinating
• Sleeping too much
• Taking it out on others (lashing out, physical violence, tantrums)

Healthy Alternatives

• Exercise
• Walking
• Talking with a friend
• Journal
• Listen to music
• Garden
• Read a good book
• Deep breathing ***
• Yoga
Benefits of Deep Breathing

- Releases endorphins
  - “Feel good” hormone
- Stimulates parasympathetic system
  - “Rest and digest”
- Increased awareness
  - More mindful at work, less errors
Get comfy! Let’s do a breathing exercise together!

- 5 minute breathing meditation podcast
  - First link at: http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22

- 5 minute diaphragmatic breathing podcast
How do you feel?

How can you implement stress reduction techniques into your daily life?
Tips for leading a less stressful life

• Healthy lifestyle choices
  • Regular exercise
  • Healthy diet
  • Reduced caffeine and sugar
  • Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, drugs
  • Get enough sleep

• Daily **practice**!!!!!!!!!
  • 10-15 minute meditation / stress reduction / meditation exercise
  • “daily mindfulness vitamin”
  • Nice relaxing body scan, great before bed – 16 mins
    • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxqkpWDHP0Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxqkpWDHP0Y)
  • Wonderful quick body scan/relaxation – 15 mins
    • [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VKi0StcOxl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VKi0StcOxl)
Sources

http://www.southerncct.edu/student-life/health/wellness/stress%20effects.jpg
http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm
http://healthysteps.umwblogs.org/2012/08/02/deep-breathing-exercise/
http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22
http://mi2g.com/images/q_cognition.jpg
http://img2.timeinc.net/health/images/slides/stress-unhappy-face-400x400.jpg
http://cdn.timelesstime.co.uk/wp-content/media/2011/07/Primamry-Sources-of-Stress.png?84cd58