

The left side of the slide features a decorative design consisting of several vertical stripes in shades of light brown and tan. To the right of these stripes are five solid brown circles of varying sizes, arranged in a roughly vertical line that tapers towards the bottom.

# UNDERSTANDING STRESS

*Created by: Christopher Gadjeu  
Source: Glencoe Health, 2009*

# WHAT IS STRESS?

- Feeling stress is a natural part of life. Stress is the reaction of the body and mind to everyday challenges and demands.



# WHAT IS STRESS?

- Your perception of an event dictates how much stress it will cause you.



## **Key Term**

### **Perception**

The act of becoming aware through the senses



# REACTING TO STRESS

- Stress can have both a negative and positive effect.

Positive stress can motivate you and inspire you to work harder.

Negative stress can cause you to feel distracted, overwhelmed, impatient, frustrated, or even angry. It can harm your health.



# CAUSES OF STRESS

- The effect of a stressor depends on your perception and experiences.



## *Key Term*

### **Stressor**

Anything that causes stress



# YOUR BODY'S RESPONSE TO STRESSORS

- When you perceive something to be dangerous, difficult, or painful your body automatically begins a stress response



# YOUR BODY'S RESPONSE TO STRESSORS

- The stress response involves three stages

## Alarm

Your mind and body go on high alert. This “fight-or-flight” response prepares you to defend yourself or to flee from a threat.

## Resistance

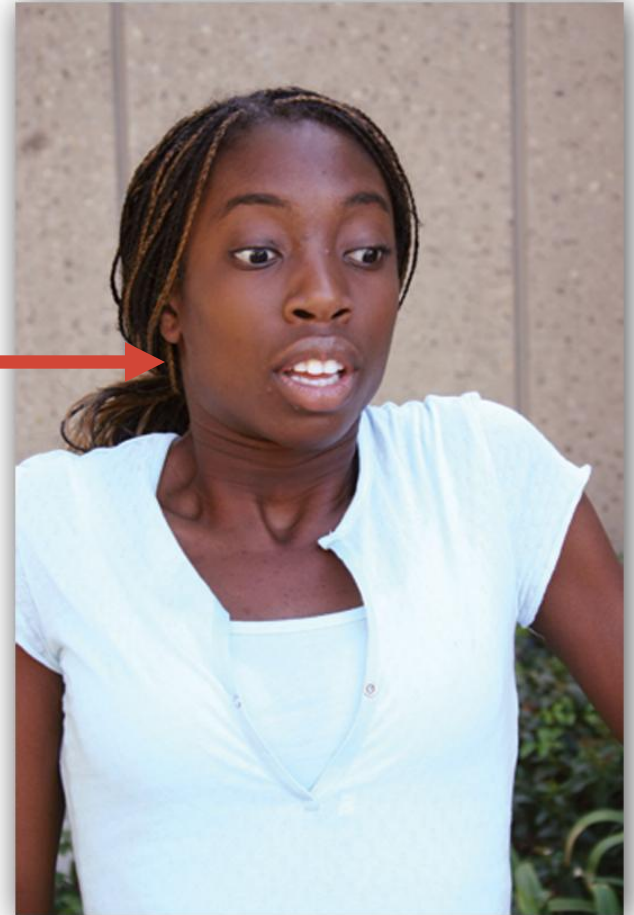
If exposure to a stressor continues, your body adapts and reacts to the stressor. This stage lasts for a brief period.

## Fatigue

If exposure to stress is prolonged, you begin to tire and lose the ability to manage other stressors effectively.

# YOUR BODY'S RESPONSE TO STRESSORS

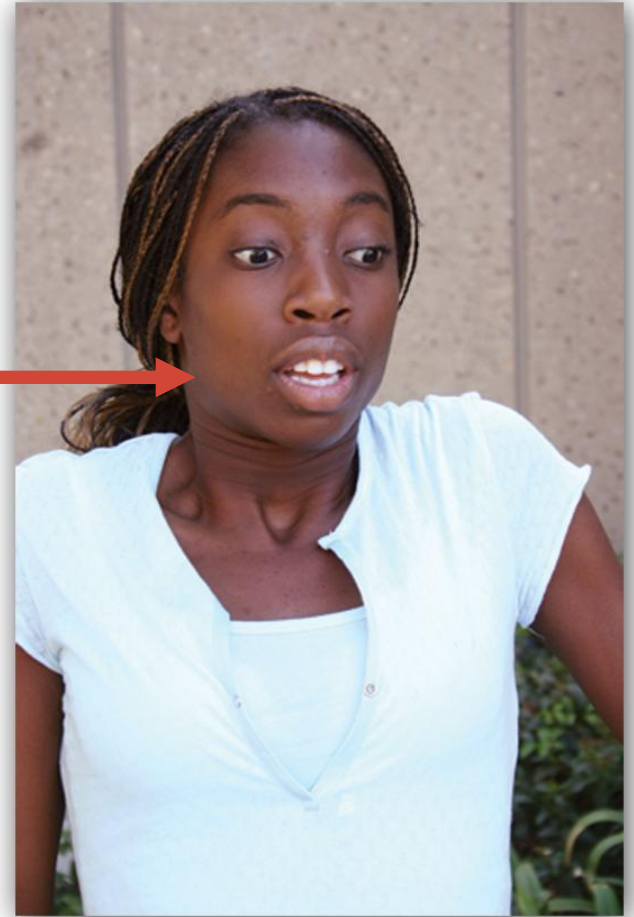
1. Alarm begins when the *hypothalamus*, a small area at the base of the brain, receives danger signals from other parts of the brain. The hypothalamus releases a hormone that acts on the pituitary gland.





# YOUR BODY'S RESPONSE TO STRESSORS

**2. The pituitary gland secretes a hormone that stimulates the adrenal glands.**

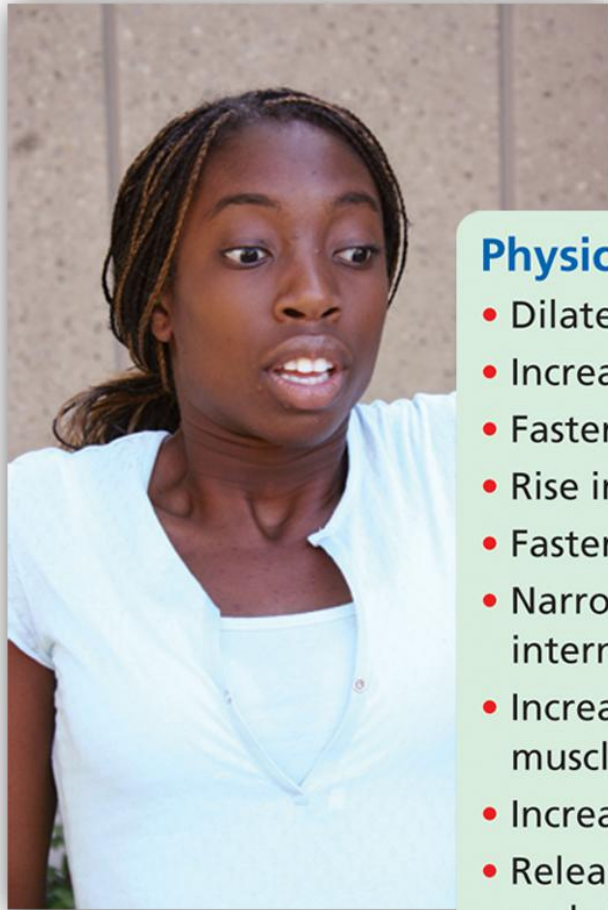


# YOUR BODY'S RESPONSE TO STRESSORS

3. The adrenal glands secrete adrenaline. *Adrenaline* is the “emergency hormone” that prepares the body to respond to a stressor.



# YOUR BODY'S RESPONSE TO STRESSORS



## Physical Symptoms

- Dilated pupils
- Increase in perspiration
- Faster heart rate and pulse
- Rise in blood pressure
- Faster respiration rate
- Narrowing of arteries to internal organs and skin
- Increased blood flow to muscles and brain
- Increase in muscle tension
- Release of blood sugar, fats, and cholesterol



# STRESS AND YOUR HEALTH

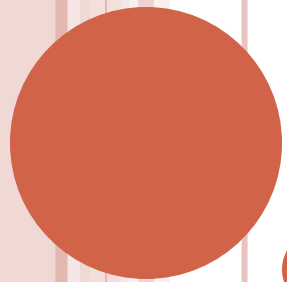
- The physical effects of Stress
  - Headache
  - Weakened Immune System
  - High Blood Pressure
  - Bruxism, clenching the jaw or grinding the teeth
  - Digestive disorders



# STRESS AND YOUR HEALTH

- Mental/Emotional and Social effects of stress
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Irritability
  - Mood swings





# MANAGING STRESS

# WHEN STRESS BECOMES A PROBLEM

- The trick for managing stress is to learn strategies to keep stress from building up and to deal with individual stressors effectively.



# WHEN STRESS BECOMES A PROBLEM

- Stress builds up over time. An increasing number of teens are experiencing Chronic Stress.



## *Key Term*

### **chronic stress**

Stress associated with long-term problems that are beyond a person's control





# AVOIDING AND LIMITING STRESS

- Avoiding situations that cause stress is the easiest way to reduce its effects.
- If you are unable to avoid a stressor, you can try to restrict or limit the amount of exposure to stress.



# AVOIDING AND LIMITING STRESS

## ○ Strategies for avoiding and limiting stress.

**Use refusal skills.**

If taking on a new activity will add to your stress, use refusal skills to say no.

**Plan ahead.**

Manage your time wisely by planning ahead. Think about how stressed you feel before a test.

**Think positively.**

A positive outlook limits stress by shifting your perception and how you respond to a stressor.

**Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.**

Using tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs will harm the body and cause more stress.

# AVOIDING AND LIMITING STRESS

## ○ Overcoming Test Anxiety

- Plan for tests well in advance, studying a little each night.
- Learn to outline material, highlighting and numbering important points to learn them quickly.
- During a test, do some deep breathing. Get comfortable in your chair. Use positive self-talk such as “I can do this!” or “Way to go!”
- Answer all the questions you are sure of, then go back and answer the ones that are more difficult.
- After getting your corrected test back, examine your mistakes. If you don’t understand the correction, ask your teacher.



# HANDLING STRESS AND REDUCING ITS EFFECTS

## ○ Tips for lower the impact of stress on your health

### Practice relaxation techniques

Deep breathing, thinking pleasant thoughts, stretching, taking a warm bath, and even laughing can relieve your stress.

### Redirect your energy

When energy builds up from stress, use that energy in a constructive way. Work on a creative project or engage in physical activity.

### Seek support

Confide in someone you trust for an objective view and valuable advice.

# STAYING HEALTHY AND BUILDING RESILIENCY

- Positive health maintenance habits help you deal with stress, prevent stress, reduce stress, and recover from stress.



# STAYING HEALTHY AND BUILDING RESILIENCY

- Get adequate Rest
  - Adequate sleep can help you face the challenges and demands of the following day.
- Get physical activity
  - Participating in regular physical activity benefits your overall health.
- Eat nutritious foods
  - Eating a variety of healthful foods and drinking plenty of water not only helps your body function properly, but it also reduces the effects of stress.

