

Health Effects of Stress

Introduction

Modern life is full of hassles, deadlines, frustrations, and demands. How do most people react to these situations? The answer is stress. Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. The human body is designed to experience stress and react to it. Stress can be positive, by keeping us alert, ready to avoid danger, helping to perform under pressure and motivating you to do your best. But it can also become negative when a person faces continuous challenges without relief or relaxation in-between. During stressful events, our bodies release chemicals (adrenaline and cortisol) into the bloodstream that then trigger what is known as the 'fight-or-flight' response. Essentially, we prepare to either tackle the source of stress head on or avoid it altogether. If you continually avoid the pressures of stress there are certain symptoms that may occur including anxiety, fatigue, and anger. The easiest ways to relieve stress is by meditation, muscle relaxation, or deep breaths. I chose it as my topic because in today's high-paced society stress is a very common issue and learning ways to relieve it could make life not only better but also easier.

Section 1: Background Information

Web site #1-Understanding Stress: Signs, Symptoms, Causes, and Effects

Score (29)

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_signs.htm

This Web site was very informational as well as organized. It touched on many issues of stress including: What is stress, Causes of stress, Effects of stress, and Dealing with stress. It didn't go into grave detail but definitely touched on the important aspects. It listed in bullets many of its facts, keeping it very easy to follow and understand. It also went on to describe step-by-step several ways to relive stress. This Web site was very informational and definitely helpful.

Web site #2- Understanding and Dealing with Stress

Score (25)

<http://www.mtstcil.org/skills/stress-tools.html>

This Web site was not as good as the first. It only had one or two following links, with no clear updated information. The information it did have was pretty understandable but lacked to be in-depth. It stated the different kinds of stress, which the first one did not but it had no graphics or charts to present the information. I would not recommend this Web site over the others because of the lack of charts and reliability in the information stated.

Web site#3- Effects of Stress

Score (30)

<http://www.stress.org/topic-effects.htm>

This is the most in-depth Web site I have looked at as far as information. It carries a wide variety of almost every topic of stress. I concentrated on the effects of stress page and it gave me 50 signs and symptoms right of the bat with a chart of a human body explaining how different parts of the body get affected. It also gives a human function curve displaying the good stress from distress (bad stress). I definitely recommend this Web site for valuable information and topic insight.

Web site#4- Stress- How Does Stress Effect Your Body

Score (28)

www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=141

This Web site had an abundance of great information on the effects of stress on the body. It showed a great visual, virtual chart where you could click a body part and it would bring up the different ways stress effects that body part. All the effects written down were very in-depth but also very understandable. I enjoyed this site very much but it didn't have the wide range of information regarding stress as the others did. It mainly focused on the effects of stress on the body.

Section 2: Research

Web site#1- News in Health- Stress Effects Both Body and Mind

Score (28)

http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2007/January/docs/01features_01.htm

This Web site had very "easy-going" information. It gave many situations that you could relate to where stress could be a factor. It also had in-depth information on how not just your body but also your brain handles and reacts to stress. I liked this Web site, it had very accurate and current information. Another thing this Web site had that most of the others didn't was quotes from legitimate doctors about studies they did or experiences they did pertaining to stress.

Web site#2- Stress: How to Cope Better With Life's Challenges

Score (27)

<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/common/mentalhealth/stress/167.html>

For the most part this Web site was very useful. It didn't go into as much details as some others but it did talk about what changes might be stressful as well how stress affects your health. It lists possible signs of stress and researches ways to deal with it, as well as exercises that help. I

found it interesting just lacking. If they went more into detail about the exercises and meditation it would be better.

Web site#3- Effects of Stress on Your Body

Score (29)

<http://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/effects-of-stress-on-your-body>

This Web site gives a very good answer to how to stay healthy and balanced with stress. It talks about how to eat right, workout right, juggle work with life, and even sleeping right. It gives you many articles on managing stress and reducing stress. But, it doesn't have any charts, or hard data to go with the articles. So it's not the most **abundant in information but a very good in certain areas.**

Web site#4- Effects of stress on the body

Score (27)

<http://www.vitalitywell.net/effects-of-stress-on-the-body>

This Web site lacked in information compared to the rest of the Web sites. It only talked about a very slim spectrum of topics. But one that it covered that the rest rarely did was the effects of your career aspirations due to stress. It only listed effects it had on the body and never went into detail. Overall it was a mediocre Web site with limited information.

Section 3: Statistics

Web site#1-Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Score (27)

<http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/topic.php?id=6#Post-Traumatic%20Stress%20Disorder>

This site had great statistics about post traumatic stress disorder. It had about ten very informational and interesting statistics. This Web site just listed off the statistics it didn't go anywhere besides other topics. Even though it wasn't as abundant, the information it did have made it worth going to.

Web site#2- Taking Care of Me: Managing Your Stress

Score (29)

http://www.hopkinscf.org/teens/living/taking_manage.html

This site has great information. It goes into many different categories pertaining to stress related issues and addresses each one with a long paragraph explaining how. It talks about many different ways to manage stress and time. It also talks about coping with stress and emotional support. I enjoyed this Web site I thought it had a lot of credible information.

Web site#3- Work-related stress - Research and statistics

Score (24)

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/research.htm>

This Web site had a lot of good information but, it was very hard to follow. Once you find your way to the statistics page your flooded with a long list of statistics about stress. They are mainly from Britain but, the information is good and talks about many different kinds of professions experiencing either more or less stress if any at all. I like this Web site but I feel it would be better if it were American statistics.

Web site#4- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Score (29)

<http://nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/complete-index.shtml#pub1>

This Web site had all the information you could imagine on post traumatic stress disorder. It answered any question with more than one answer and in several sentences. They list treatments and medications, as well as ways to detect it. I enjoyed this Web site, it was a little lengthy with information but it was very well put together.

Consumer Information

Web site#1- Stress begins at an early age: before you might imagine

(23)

<http://www.mind-body.org/stress%20early%20age.htm>

This Web site wouldn't be the best one to get your information. It has information on how stress begins, along with some studies done to see the effects in certain conditions. It doesn't quite go in-depth enough only stating the main definition and regular essentials in learning about the topic. It doesn't contain any charts and is mostly dull in reading.

Web site#2- The Effects of Age on Stress Levels and Its Affect on Overall Performance

(28)

<http://www.aabss.org/journal2003/Schultz.htm>

This Web site gives you information on almost any kind of situation relating to stress. It's more of a study than an information Web site but fortunately it contains a lot of great information. The

information is to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the stress level exhibited by an individual during an evaluation and his or her chronological age. This information may not be credible.

Web site#3- Stress (biological)

(28)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stress_%28medicine%29

This Web site has a lot of great information. Even though Wikipedia may not be the most credible source, I would definitely say that this would be a good one to take a look at. It contains loads of great information as well as a chart displaying the time effects of stress.

Web site#4- Stress

(29)

http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/stress.html

This is a great Web site. It is very informational and very easy to follow/understand. I definitely feel like it carries a great amount of consumer information and clever ways to relieve stress. It even has tabs where you can click on to see different things such as breathing exercises to help you relieve stress.

Conclusions

O Section 1: Background and Statement

My favorite Web site without a doubt was www.stress.org. It had graphs, charts, lists on the symptoms, pretty much any kind of information on stress you were looking for. It had a very broad set of information that was very easy to follow. It was very organized and set-up in a manner that eases the mind and allows for easy intake.

My least favorite Web site was <http://www.mtstcil.org/skills/stress-tools.html>. It had the least amount of information than any other Web site. The information that it did have was short and not very interesting. It didn't have any charts or graphs to go along with the information either.

• Section 2: Research

Something that I never knew until I researched stress was that it was good for you. I always thought of it as a negative thing, that it only made people angry but in fact it only makes angry in high doses. Doctor Paul Rosch described it in my favorite way.

He states: "Increased stress increases productivity – up to a point, after which things rapidly deteriorate, and that level also differs for each of us. It's much like the stress or tension on a violin string. Not enough produces a dull raspy sound and too much an irritating screech or snaps the string – but just the correct degree of stress creates a beautiful tone." [-Paul J. Rosch, M.D., F.A.C.P.](#)

Section 3: Statistics

The statistic Web sites had great information including: Forty-three percent of all adults suffer adverse health effects from stress. While Seventy-five to 90% of all doctor's office visits are for stress-related ailments and complaints. Statistics show that stress can play a part in problems such as headaches, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, skin conditions, asthma, or arthritis in addition to depression and anxiety. This shows what a large impact that stress has on the body.

Section 4: Consumer Information

My favorite Web site about consumer information was: kidshealth.org/teen/you_mind/emotions/stress. This article is extremely easy to read and would be an excellent article to give someone who knows nothing about the disease. It provides the reader with background information, information on how it was discovered, symptoms of the disease, and those at risk. It is an in-depth article and touches on many points. The Web site is also very user friendly.

My least favorite Web site would be: www.mind-body.org/stress%20early%20age. This Web site didn't have that great of information. It wasn't said to be 100% accurate or reliable, which is where most of the points were deducted. It just wasn't lengthy enough and didn't contain the kind of data that you would be looking for as a consumer.

Conclusion

For the most part, the Web sites I haven't chosen to include were fairly informational. I found that the "dot com" Web sites were very informational. I most likely would have used a few more of those if it were required. Most of the Web sites that I didn't include either didn't have a large extent of information or they were difficult to understand. Information was mainly easy to come across and I have learned a great deal about Stress. I was surprised to find that it affected people positively as well as negatively and I was also intrigued by seeing how much it was apart of people lives and how it affected them physically as well as mentally.

Back to Betty C. Jung's Web site	http://www.bettyjung.net/
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