

STRESS – CAUSES & MANAGEMENT

Stress is increasingly manifesting in today's world with varied manifestation & complex etiologies. It is not a recent phenomenon although its incidence is clearly increasing. Stress is a broad terminology which can include mental, physical, emotional, psychosocial, sexual and scholastic aspects.

CAUSES

- (a) **Younger children** - academic stress, peer pressure, influence of television and media, even environmental factors, nutrition and its deficiency.
- (b) **Teenagers** - school and college pressure, exam. tension, peer pressure, family stress and influence, career options, stress of substance abuse, alcohol, smoking, drugs etc.
- (c) **Young adult** - is stress of job, corporate affairs, financial tension, family strain, marital disharmony, stress of children, and their illnesses, school admission etc.
- (d) **Middle Age** - family and children stresses, financial strength, health and its associated stresses, stresses of day to day living eg. taxation problem, maintenance of house, vehicle etc. there is an ever increasing risk of cardiovascular events.
- (e) **Old age** - is stress of old age as itself, stress of illnesses, chronic health problems, neurological and degenerative problems, stress of post retirement, loneliness etc.
- (f) **Manifestations of stress** - these vary with respect to age - young children and adolescents have chronic headache, migraine cluster headache, muscular & joints complaints, lack of attention, poor school & college academic performance, visual disturbances, psychologically becoming introverts etc. In an older age group manifestation can be of headache lethargy, anger, depression, violence, habit ticks, addiction to drugs, obesity, eating disorders, disturbed sleep etc
- (g) **Growing entity** of chronic fatigue syndrome, even in young children due to repeated and chronic physical and mental stress. In various studies $\frac{1}{4}$ of children in school going age group, complaints of mental and academic stress; and an even higher percentage of young adults have this manifestation.

In this world where there is no place for those who also ran, and only a topper being recognized; the insecurity, strain, lack of performance, lack of opportunities and other events of life debilitate any human being.

PREVENTION

Young children require love, no punishment family bonding, lack of stress on academics and exams, enjoyment in sports and outdoor activities, proper life style management of good nutrition, less of indoor activities eg. Television and videogame and positive re-enforcement by parents.

PREVENTION IN ELDERS

Elders require life style management, to keep away from life style of smoking and alcohol in take, regular exercise, correct dietary advise, correction of posture and and gait, regular breaks and holidays with family and friends, outlet of energy into sports and hobbies / recreation, etc. There is a growing awareness of yoga, meditation, health resorts and stress management counseling institutions which all help in managing stress.

Stress is indeed a manifestation which varies from individual to individual and is more commonly seen in type A personality who are ambitious, hyper and achievers, who raice against time. In this age of being jet set, young corporate executives live the life on the road with the laptop, mobile phone, where every second and deal counts for them. The same corporate executives are in and out of airports and long distance flights which all increase to the body stress.

COMPLICATIONS

Short term - irritability, headache, depressions, anger, lack of performance in school or office, etc.

Long term complication include hypertension, depression, risk of cardiovascular events and strokes, diabetes etc.

Conclusion - being stressed is in one owns hand. Proper planning of life style management, adequate nutrition, sports and hobbies perusal, regular holidays etc. all help in keeping away stress even in the most busy professional.