



# Strategies for Stress Management

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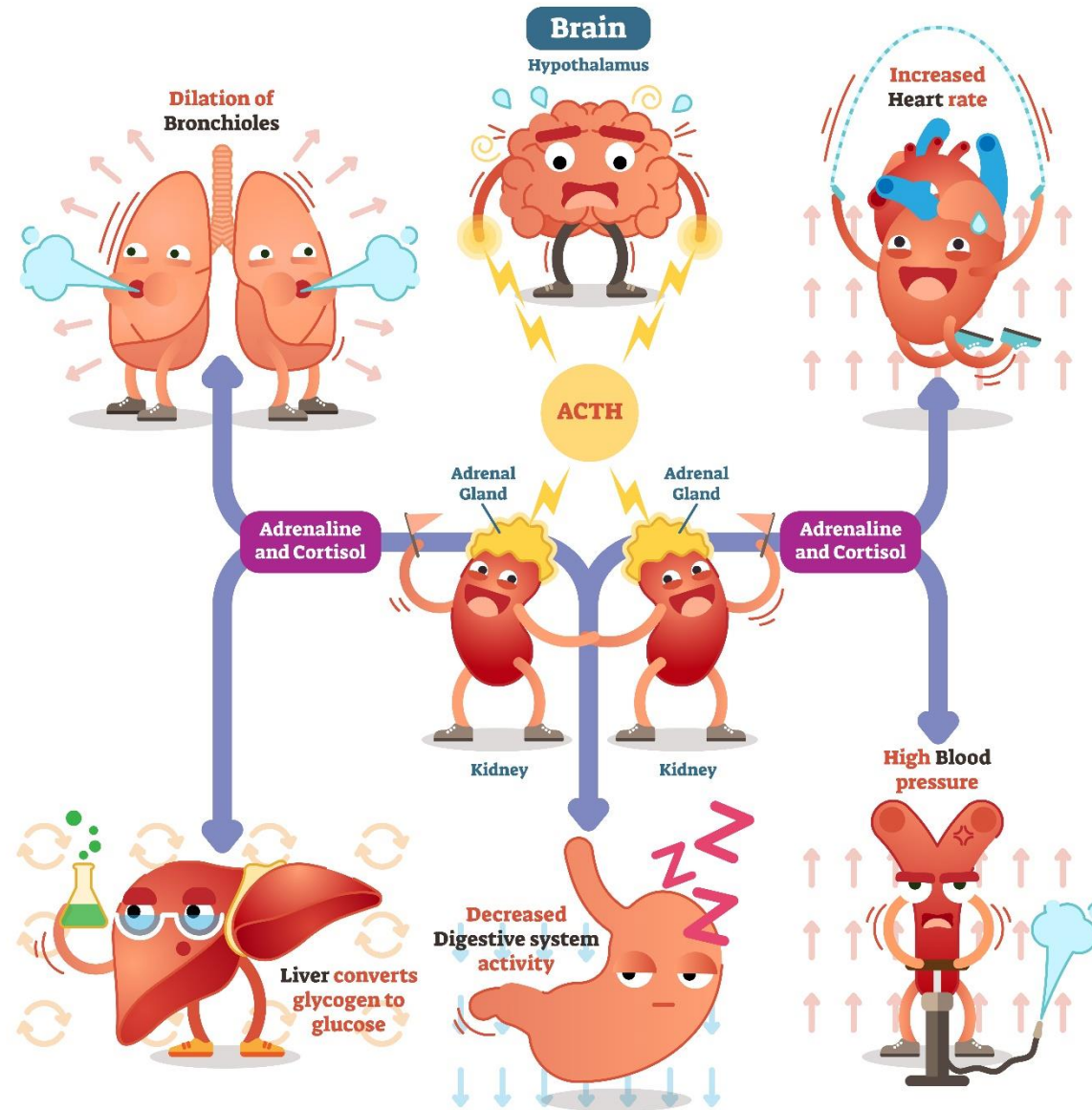
# Defining Stress

## Physical and emotional response to change

- Body is designed to experience it
- Can be “good” or “bad”
- Activates “fight, flight, or freeze” response



# STRESS RESPONSE SYSTEM



# Symptoms of Stress

- Anxiety/Depression
- Headaches
- Over/under eating
- Restlessness
- Burnout
- Substance use
- Isolation
- Loss of focus
- Fatigue
- Anger/Irritability



# Circle of Control



# Vulnerabilities

Physical or emotional conditions

Impact our ability to respond effectively

Can be reduced

Impact ability manage stress



# Managing Vulnerabilities

- Exercise
- Eat regular, balanced meals
- Establish a good sleep schedule
- Avoid substance use
- Engage in self-care
- Engage in community (social, religious or spiritual)



# Vagus Nerve



- Nerve that connects brain, stomach, and many other parts of body.
- Part of parasympathetic nervous system.
- Can be stimulated to help combat stress.

# Stimulate Vagus Nerve

- Cold stimulation – apply cold water to your face or back of neck
- Singing or humming
- Yoga
- Massages
- Laughing
- Supplements
- Paced Breathing



# Paced Breathing

Used to decrease heartrate and emotional intensity.

Instructions:

1. Breath from belly
2. Slow your pace of breathing
3. Exhale longer than you inhale



mindfulness

# Challenge Distorted Thinking

## Avoid

- "I can't handle this!"
- Polarized thinking.
- Catastrophizing.

## Practice

- How can I handle this?
- Seek to find balance.
- Focus on what is.



# Create Work/Life Balance

- Leave work at the “office”.
- Create a transition time.
- Practice being present.
- Avoid multi-tasking.
- Make time for mental “freedom”.



# Create an “end of day” practice

1. Write tomorrow’s “to-do”.
2. Identify priorities and create a plan for your day.
3. Send final emails.
4. Turn off computer and tidy your workstation.
5. Take a few deep breaths and consciously release the work day.
6. Adopt an end of day affirmation.



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# Resources

- [A Mindful State](#) -Washington
- [Find Your Words](#) -Kaiser
- [Finding Balance: Stress Management Guide](#) -Kaiser
- [Finding Balance Workbook](#) –Kaiser
- [Mental and Emotional Well-Being](#) - Washington
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) -Washington
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- [Understanding the Stress Response](#) –Harvard Medical School
- [WA Listens](#) or call 1-833-681-0211
- [WA Warm Line](#) or call 1-877-500-9276





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