

# Stress Management

*in Times of Uncertainty*



# Learning Objectives

You will learn:

- To understand ways stress may affect your overall health and wellbeing.
- New skills and tools to manage stress and maintain wellness during times of uncertainty.
- How to set and achieve goals.
- Where to go for help, support and resources.



# The Basics of Stress

## What is stress?

Stress is a **normal reaction** the body has to any change that requires an adjustment or response.

The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental and emotional responses.

## What is stress response?

A normal response to the demands and changes of life – both positive and negative

- An individual response
- A physiological response
- A response that is necessary for survival



# Physical Signs & Symptoms

- Headaches
- Muscle tension
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Upset stomach



# Mental Signs & Symptoms

- Trouble thinking clearly
- Poor concentration
- Confusion
- Negative self-talk
- Forgetfulness
- Poor judgment



# Emotional Signs & Symptoms



- Feeling out of control
- Nervousness, anxiety
- Sadness, depression
- Hopelessness
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Increased anger
- Thoughts of death or suicide

# Behavioral Signs & Symptoms

- Aggression
- Procrastination
- Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- Inability to start or complete projects
- Compulsive gambling, sex or internet use





# Causes of Stress

- Uncontrollable or unpredictable events
- Traumatic events, like COVID-19
- Employment challenges and demands
- Conflicting expectations
- Environmental conditions
- Insufficient resources – internal and external
- Relationships
- Health
- Finances
- Threats to safety



# Impact of COVID-19

- Unexpected
- Threatened our lives and the lives of our family members
- Created fear and a sense of helplessness
- Changed our societal norms and world views
- Created a need to balance activities with associated risks
- Economic/financial impacts
- Facing great adversity
- Missed life events
- Competing directives for information

# Manage Employment Stress

## Work from Home

Take breaks, maintain normal work hours, connect with colleagues.

## Returning to an Office

Follow safety guidance, communicate with coworkers.

## Unemployment or Layoffs

Identify resources, practice self-care.



# Parenting During Uncertain Times

- Answer questions simply and honestly.
  - Recognize your child's feelings.
  - Keep in touch with loved ones.
  - Model how to manage feelings.
  - Offer extra hugs.
- *Structure the day.*
  - *Find fun!*
  - *Use rewards & privileges.*
  - *Take care of yourself.*
  - *Remember to take a breath.*

# Resiliency

**Resiliency:** The capacity to rise above difficult circumstance and the ability to recover from setbacks.

- Being flexible and staying positive
- Reframing that challenges are a part of life, and we will get through this
- Ability to see effective solutions and opportunities for growth
- Having and using your support system: friends and family
- Caring for others
- The ability to view yourself as a survivor, not a victim

**Resiliency does not mean you are invulnerable, perfect or isolated.**

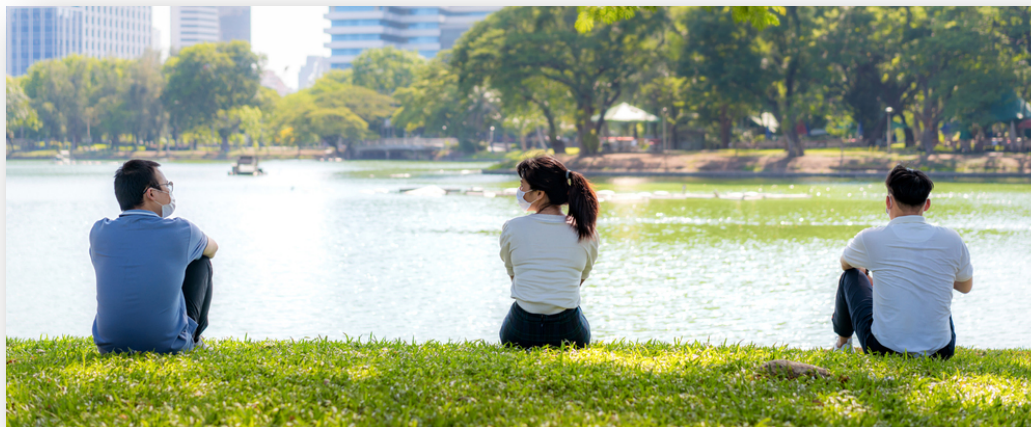
# Building Resiliency

- Stay connected.
- Practice self-care.
- Focus on positive thinking.
- Set your goals.
- Seek additional support.



# Social Strategies - Staying Connected

- Make and maintain social connections, plan ahead.
- Share your thoughts and feelings with someone you trust.
- Reach out to others when you feel overwhelmed.
- Engage in social activities that don't involve excessive alcohol, drugs or destructive behavior.



# Self-Care

*Take care of yourself: mind, body and spirit*

- Take breaks from news and information.
- Take time for activities you enjoy.
- Manage any health conditions.
- Exercise regularly and eat well.
- Get enough sleep.
- Avoid drugs/alcohol and excessive caffeine.
- Support your spirituality.





# Relaxation Techniques

- Deep breathing
- Mindfulness
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Take a bath
- Visualization or guided imagery
- Progressive muscle relaxation



# Positive Thinking

## Recognize negative thoughts

- Journaling
- Thought stopping
- Rubber band snap/string reminder

## Replace negative thoughts!

- Use milder wording
- Change negative to neutral or positive
- Change self-limiting statements to questions

# Setting Goals

Set goals that are:

- Small
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Specific



Identify at least one small goal:

# When to Seek Help

## *How do I know if I need help?*

- Seek help if symptoms are impacting your work, relationships or daily routine.

## *Where can I get help?*

- Primary Care Manager (PCM), psychiatrist
- Therapist – go to [www.tricare-west.com](http://www.tricare-west.com) to find a local provider or call TRICARE Customer Service at 1-844-866-WEST (1-844-866-9378)
- MHS Nurse Advice Line – 1-800-TRICARE (1-800-874-2273), option 1
- Military OneSource – go to [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com) or call 1-800-342-9647
- Coast Guard Support – go to: [www.cgsuprt.com](http://www.cgsuprt.com) or call 1-855-CG SUPRT (1-855-247-8778)
- Suicide Prevention Line – 1-800-273-8255
- **Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room**

# Celebrate Your Progress!

- You have tools to help you manage stress.
- Recognize each and every success.
- Recognizing and rewarding your success helps keep you motivated and on track for future goals.



# Resources

## Handouts

- Effects of Stress on the Body
- Relaxation Response Technique
- Stress Management Tips

## Web Resources

- [Parenting in a Pandemic: Tips to Keep the Calm at Home -- American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Get the Facts About Corona Virus -- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [TRICARE -- Coronavirus Guidance](#)
- [Stress - Mental Health America](#)
- [Coping in Times of Uncertainty](#)
- [Chronic Care/Disease Management Self-Nomination](#)

**Accessing Health Net Federal Services Health and Wellness programs and resources**  
[www.tricare-west.com > Beneficiary > Health and Wellness Center > Learning Center](#)

# Conclusion

- Questions?
- [Class Evaluation](#)



# Presentation References

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/basics/stress-basics/hlv-20049495>
- <https://ldi.upenn.edu/healthpolicysense/responding-trauma-covid-19>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Parenting-in-a-Pandemic.aspx>
- <https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>
- <https://www.virginpulse.com/blog-post/5-tips-to-stay-connected-while-practicing-social-distancing-during-coronavirus-covid-19/>
- <https://www.umms.org/coronavirus/what-to-know/prevention-safety/staying-in/staying-connected>
- <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-use-positive-self-talk-for-stress-relief-3144816>