

—PURE—

Whole-Food & Plant-Based Support

Module 9

Stress and Stimulation

Disclaimer

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Module 9 Guide

Stress

- Stress and Sleep
- Don't Stress

Stimulation

- Avoid Caffeine

Stress

Determining the cause of your stress is your first step. After identifying the cause is the time to start working on strategies to deal with them. Often it is as easy as staying away from the neighbor who drives you nuts, or turning off the news. If you can't avoid the stress inducer, the next step is to figure out ways to live with it.

Don't try to do it on your own. Join a group whose members are going through the same stress as you and/or seek help from family and friends. You may also benefit from daily practices that encourage stress reduction. Some of these include mindfulness, prayer, meditation, yoga or just going outside to enjoy nature

In our world, it is unrealistic to expect stress to disappear from your life. Managing stress isn't a one day thing. With consistent effort, you can learn to manage your levels of stress and increase your ability to handle the challenges that bring stress.

Stress

You can relieve stress by:

- Laughing
- Exercising
- Proper nutrition
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Prayer
- Enjoying nature
- Reading
- Getting away from the cause
- Taking a break
- A steam shower
- A warm bath
- Deep breathing
- Focusing on gratitude
- Participating in your favorite hobby
- Anything on/or around water
- Running
- An act of kindness
- A good night's sleep

Stress and Sleep

Efficient sleep combats stress and expedites the benefits of an exercise and nutrition program.

To sleep deeply is to sleep efficiently. Better rested people have more energy and aren't reliant upon stimulants such as sugar or caffeine.

Your average North American adult only sleeps about 6 hours a night. Most experts recommend 8-9 hours of nightly sleep for optimal health benefits.

Don't Stress

There are two types of energy:

1. Energy obtained from stimulation
2. Energy obtained from nourishment

Generally speaking, the more a food is processed, the more stimulating it will be to the nervous system. When we consume caffeinated beverages or refined foods, we get energy almost instantly. But it is short-term, unsustainable energy; the stimulation of the adrenal glands is inevitably followed by fatigue.

Don't Stress

In our culture, we tend to use additional stimulation to overcome this fatigue, which in turn produces more fatigue, and so on.

In contrast, when we eat natural and whole foods, our body is less stimulated and more nourished. Energy derived from good health, called cost-free energy, does not take a toll on the adrenal glands, nor does it regularly need to be “stoked” with stimulating substances.

People who are truly well have boundless energy, without reliance on stimulants such as caffeine or refined sugar.

Don't Stress

Maybe you've seen them, people who come to the gym week after week, month after month, and even year after year, but never seem to get leaner. The underlying problem may be too much stress, which culminates in a variety of health problems.

The solution? Stop exercising. Taking time off from training can be one of the best ways to kick-start results. In some cases, it is the only way to get back on track. The reason these people don't make any gains is that their cortisol is elevated*. And because exercise is a form of physical stress, it elevates those levels even further.

Rest, eating a primarily whole foods diet, and avoid overly stimulating foods and drinks. When overall stress levels are low, that's when significant exercise gains are made.

*"Higher and more prolonged levels of cortisol in the bloodstream (like those associated with chronic stress) have been shown to have negative effects ..."
<http://stress.about.com/od/stresshealth/a/cortisol.htm>

Avoid Caffeine

1. Cardiovascular Problems

Caffeine increases heart rate, elevates blood pressure and can contribute to the development of heart disease.

2. Stress

Caffeine stimulates the excretion of stress hormones, which can produce increased levels of anxiety, irritability, muscular tension and pain, indigestion, insomnia and decreased immunity.

3. Emotional Disturbances

Anxiety and irritability are hallmark mood disturbances associated with caffeine consumption, but equally important are depression and attention disorders.

4. Blood Sugar Swings

Caffeine stimulates a temporary surge in blood sugar followed by an overproduction of insulin, which causes a blood sugar crash within hours. This rollercoaster causes weight gain since insulin's message to the body is to store excess sugar as fat.

Avoid Caffeine

5. Gastrointestinal Problems

Coffee, including decaf, reduces pressure on the valve between the esophagus and the stomach so that the highly acidic contents of the stomach pass up to the esophagus, which can lead to heartburn and gastro-esophageal reflux disease.

6. Nutritional Deficiencies

Caffeine inhibits the absorption of some nutrients and causes the urinary excretion of calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, and trace minerals.

7. Male Health Problems

Milton Krisiloff, MD, has found that in the majority of cases, men can significantly reduce their risk for urinary and prostate problems by making dietary changes, which include eliminating coffee and caffeine.

Avoid Caffeine

8. Female Health Problems

Fibrocystic breast disease, PMS, osteoporosis, infertility problems, miscarriage, low birth weight and menopausal problems such as hot flashes are all exacerbated by caffeine consumption.

9. Aging

Caffeine dehydrates the body and contributes to aging of the skin and kidneys. It has been shown to inhibit DNA repair and slow the ability of the liver to detoxify foreign toxins. Many people in their 30s and 40s find their tolerance for caffeine significantly decreased from their earlier years.

Assessment

Five positive changes this week?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are your main concerns?

What can you do in the next week to bring you closer to your goals?

How did you feel?

Assessment

	Weight	Sleep	Constipation/ Diarrhea	Energy	Mood
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					