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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Coping with Stress

Last week I discussed how excessive and prolonged stress could be detrimental to our overall health. This week, I will give you some action steps to help you deal with the stress that you are exposed to each day.

Eat Right: Eat low fat foods and do not consume more calories than you burn. If you become overweight, your heart and lungs must work that much harder. If you are under excessive stress, ask your pharmacist about taking higher levels of Vitamin C, Magnesium, and B-complex vitamins.

Start Off Right: Get up early in the morning so you have time to relax and start the day in a calm manner. This sets the tone for the entire day. If you are disorganized and behind schedule first thing in the morning, the rest of the day will likely feel just as stressful.

Simplify Your Life: You need to prioritize your time and simplify your life. If you've taken on too many responsibilities, let some go. Don't volunteer for a project you can't handle. The world appreciates your contribution, but will continue on without it. Make time for the things you enjoy.

Relax: Create quiet times during the day to relax, read, or simply do nothing. Picture yourself in a peaceful place, breath deeply and begin relaxing your body, from your head down to your toes. Listening to a special tape might help. Create a relaxing, tranquil sanctuary within yourself, where you can go any time. When you feel yourself getting stressed, close your eyes, and breath deeply.

See Your Chiropractor: He or she is highly trained to identify and treat the stiff joints, tight muscles, and irritated nerves that inevitably arise from exposing your body to the ongoing physical and/or emotional stress of life.

Stretch and Exercise Daily: There are numerous neck and shoulder stretches and exercises available on our website: www.merrittchiro.com. By doing these daily, it is possible to prevent your neck and shoulder muscles from becoming too tense.

Get Adequate Sleep: As I have mentioned in previous articles, getting enough sleep is very important. Without it, your ability to fight off disease will weaken.

Control Your Finances: This is the most stressful aspect of life for most people. There are steps to handle this, only most people stop at step one and get stressed because they can't earn enough more money. But, earning more money is only step one. Step two is decrease your expenses, step three is pay off your debts, and step four is to save at least ten percent of your gross income in a long-term savings portfolio. All four steps must be done simultaneously and the earlier you start, the less stressful your finances will be.

Plan: Don't worry about things that you don't have any control over, instead plan on dealing with the possible outcomes and hope for the best. If you know the mortgage payment is going to be late, don't get stressed about it, instead ask your boss for an advance, call the bank, send the payment in late. Accept the consequences and concentrate on a plan of action. You don't go to the store without directions; don't live your life without a direction. Make a list of simple, yet rewarding, goals for your life and constantly strive to meet those goals.

Although these suggestions may seem obvious, it is amazing how many people do not follow through with them. Try to accomplish just one at a time until you have mastered all of them. Only then will you feel like you are out of the “rat race”, allowing you to live a healthier and more fulfilling life.