



The Stress Effect

This section is dedicated to helping you understand the significance of stress in your life and to outline you how best to manage the stress inherent in today's fast-paced world. Stress itself has become perhaps the most widely spoken of health concern today. In 2004 Newsweek published an article stating that 60 to 90% of all doctor visits in the US involve stress-related complaints. That's a lot of trips to the doctor!

What about the actual cost of stress on our health, personal finances and the economy? According to the CDC, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, health care expenditures are nearly 50% greater for workers who report high levels of stress. Add up those two statistics and you can see that excess stress is costing us a fortune, personally and nationally. We clearly need to find ways to manage stress more effectively.

So, what is stress and how does it affect you? To start, when we talk about stress, we are mainly concerned with the physiological "stress response" that occurs when faced with a perceived threat, either physical or emotional, real or imagined. This "stress response" is characterized by certain physiological changes your body undergoes – blood pressure rises, heart rate quickens, breathing accelerates and you experience greater muscle tension. This is not altogether a bad thing, as these reactions could help save your life in a dangerous situation, and may even increase your focus and alertness at your job. Science has discovered that there are stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol that produce these changes, along with certain other chemical messengers.

These responses begin to cause problems, however, when they do not balance throughout the course of the day. When your body is overdosed with these hormones and chemicals, you enter into a 'chronic stress pattern' which eventually leads to many other illnesses. According to the Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety, cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders (pain), psychological disorders, workplace injury, and even cancer, ulcers, and impaired immune function all have a strong correlation with uncompensated stress.

Achieving a life of balance where you can healthfully manage your stress levels should at the top of your priority list. The change needs to occur in lifestyle, because it is a problem of lifestyle. Often there is little that can be done with regard to responsibilities and commitments that you face on a day to day basis, but what about helping your body to balance the stress response with relaxation therapies? At The Spa on Green Street, we offer stress-reducing massage therapy, yoga and fitness classes to help you achieve this sense of balance. In addition, participation in our ongoing stress management classes is greatly encouraged to help address the way in which you perceive stress. Proper nutrition is also a huge contributor to stress levels and many of our guests also benefit from customized nutritional support, to help correct energetic imbalances and increase stamina throughout the day. Our *Spa on Green Street Wellness Program* covers all these areas in great detail.

We look forward to helping you achieve the healthy lifestyle that you deserve.

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