

## Healthy Lifestyle Tips

### Part I: Leading a Healthy Lifestyle

#### *A. Eat a Well Balanced Diet*

When you are stressed your need for all nutrients increases, especially your need for calcium and B vitamins. Conversely, a poor diet can generate stress. For example, a diet low in calcium may not be able to counteract the lactic acid produced by tense muscles. This may result in an increase in fatigue, anxiety and irritability which may generate further stress.

A well balanced diet can directly help manage or prevent hypertension, indigestion, ulcers, constipation, obesity and diabetes. Eating a well balanced diet can help reduce depression, irritability, anxiety, headaches, fatigue and insomnia.

#### **Dietary Goals for Stress Management:**

- Increase Complex Carbohydrates.
- Reduce overall fat consumption.
- Reduce saturated fat. Substitute unsaturated fats with polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats.
- Reduce foods high in cholesterol.
- Reduce sugar consumption and foods high in sugar content.
- Reduce salt consumption and foods high in salt content.
- Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Decrease consumption of meat and increase consumption of poultry and fish.
- Increase fibre.
- Increase water intake.

*B. Restrict Foods High in Cholesterol*

<b>Product</b>	<b>Include</b>	<b>Avoid</b>
<b>Fats and Oils: (use in moderation)</b>	Polyunsaturated margarine and oil. Low fat spreads. Monounsaturated margarine and oils e.g. Canola, Olive Oil. Polyunsaturated mayonnaise and salad dressings	Butter, lard, copha, ghee, suet, cooking and table margarine, coconut oil, palm oil
<b>Milk and Dairy Products</b>	Skim milk, Shape milk, low fat yoghurt, cheese (less than 15% fat), cottage and ricotta cheese, low fat ice-cream fat modified milk. Polyunsaturated ice-creams, "Trim" milk and fat-reduced cheese (in moderation)	Full cream milk, cream, sour cream, cream cheese, ice-cream, block cheese
<b>Meats and Meat Products/Poultry</b>	Lean red meat, chicken, game turkey, lean ham & cornbeef. Trim off fat and skin, eat smaller serves	Fatty meats, sausages, rissoles, bacon, liver, kidney, brains, duck, devon, salami, pate etc
<b>Legumes</b>	All dried and canned peas, beans, e.g. soy, kidney, navy, lentils, baked beans	
<b>Fish and Shellfish</b>	Fish (all types of fresh, frozen, canned) 2-3 times per week. Avoid these canned in oil. Oysters, scallops, crab, mussels. Avoid frying. Squid, calamari, prawns (once a week)	Fried seafood or seafood fatty sauces, e.g. cheese sauces
<b>Eggs</b>	Yolk-free egg substitutes, egg white, eggs - up to 2 yolks per week	More than 2 eggs per week
<b>Breads and Cereals</b>	Bread (all type), breakfast cereals, rolled oats, flours, rice, pasta, all grains, crisp-breads, cracker-bread, filo pastry, English muffins, pocket bread, fruit breads	Croissants, toasted muesli, cakes, pastry, biscuits, danish pastries, garlic bread, muesli bars
<b>Fruit and Vegetables</b>	All fruit and vegetables. Fresh, frozen, tinned, dried	Vegetables cooked in fat or fatty sauces, e.g. potato chips
<b>Nuts (Eat in moderation if overweight)</b>	Walnuts, pine nuts, almonds, pecans, hazelnuts, macadamias, peanuts, peanut butter, brazil nuts, pistachios	Coconut, cashews, coconut cream/milk, deep fried nuts
<b>Sauces and Spreads</b>	Tomato paste, herbs, spices, pepper, soy sauce, tomato sauce, vegemite, honey, jam	Butter and cheese sauces, cream sauces
<b>Snack Foods</b>	Fresh or dried fruit, yoghurt, fresh vegetables, bread, crisp-breads, popcorn, pretzels. Nuts in moderation	Potato crisps, chocolate, carob, twisties, cheezels, corn chips etc
<b>Take-Away foods</b>	Sandwiches, barbecue chicken (no skin), low fat yoghurt, fresh fruit, fruit salad, frilled fish, salads (watch dressing) burritos, Asian (low fat) baked potato, lean meat kebabs, hamburgers made from low fat meat (no cheese)	Fried chicken, hot chips, fried fish, potato scallops, pizza, meat pie, sausage rolls, spring rolls, dim-sims, chiko rolls, fried rice.

Adapted from the National Heart Foundation (QLD Division) Pamphlet: "Guidelines for Cholesterol Control".

### *C. Reduced Salt Intake*

A high salt diet is linked to blood pressure. Eat more fresh foods and choose “no added salt”, “low” or “reduced salt” foods. Learn to read labels as salt (or sodium) is present in many processed foods such as vegemite, stock cubes, cornflakes, sandwich meats, baking soda, soft drinks and medications such as antacid.

### *D. Reduce Caffeine Intake*

Coffee, tea, chocolate and coca-cola are high in caffeine. Caffeine is a stimulant that is similar to adrenalin. Caffeine also depletes the body of Vitamin B.

### *E. Plenty of Sleep*

It is important to get sufficient sleep. Generally, most people need eight hours of sleep a night. If we get too little sleep, depression could occur.

### *F. Stop Smoking*

Nicotine is a stimulant and therefore adds to stress. It is the behaviours associated with smoking which can cause some people to believe that smoking relaxes them. There is not a “safe” level of smoking. Smoking contributes to heart attacks, stroke and cancers. It is never too late to give up smoking. The risk of heart attacks drops quickly after the smoker quits.

### *G. Exercise Regularly*

When you are feeling uptight, vigorous exercise will assist you to channel out the excess energy. Regular exercise is also an effective preventative stress management technique. In times of stress it is important to engage in aerobic exercise for about twenty minutes every second day. This is approximately 1% of your time.

### *H. Reduce Alcohol*

Alcohol is high in calories and low in other nutrients. It depletes your system of the B vitamins, which are important in helping you cope with stress. Alcohol is a depressant. The relaxing effects of alcohol is achieved by having two standard drinks. Any more will cause a loss of impairment and will not lead you to becoming more physically relaxed.

### *I. If Overweight, Reduce*

If you are looking for an easy and effective way to lose weight, forget the word “diet”. Quick weight loss and fad diets have little hope of long term success.

Making some permanent changes to your eating habits and getting some regular physical activity each day will be far more effective.

These steps are important for successful weight loss:

- Aim to lose about 0.5 kg to 1 kg each week.
- Set a realistic goal.
- Choose a varied, balanced diet, high in fibre and low in fat.
- Become more physically active.
- Select high fibre foods that will make you feel more satisfied.

Here are a few tips to help with better eating.  
Tick the changes you could make!

### **Eat less fat**

- Trim the fat from meat and remove skin from chicken.
- Choose smaller serves of meat and chicken and include fish at least twice a week.
- Avoid fried and deep fried foods.
- Cook without fat - grill, bake, microwave, steam or dry fry.
- Choose low fat dairy foods, e.g. low fat milks, low fat yoghurt, cottage or ricotta cheese.
- Avoid adding fats such as margarine, dressings, mayonnaise, cream and sour cream.
- Save high fat foods for special occasions, e.g. cream, chips, nuts, chocolate, cakes, takeaway foods.

### **Eat more foods high in starch and fibre**

- Choose wholemeal and wholegrain varieties of foods.
- Start with fruits and vegetables as a good base to your meals.
- Include more dried peas and beans in your meals, e.g. baked beans, kidney beans, lentils, split peas.

### **Cut down hidden sugar and fat**

- Choose fresh fruit, vegetables, dried fruit, bread or low fat yoghurt as a snack.
- Save cakes, biscuits, lollies, ice cream and chocolate for special treats.
- Drink water to quench your thirst.

- Try to limit cordials, soft drinks, fruit juices and alcohol as these provide only excess calories - choose low calorie soft drinks or cordials instead.
- Check food labels to compare fat and sugar content.
- Eat regular meals (in particular don't skip breakfast).
- Avoid reducing meals during the day, and then overeating at the evening meal.
- Have low fat snacks ready - choose these instead of buying cakes, biscuits.
- And other high calorie snacks.

### Be more active

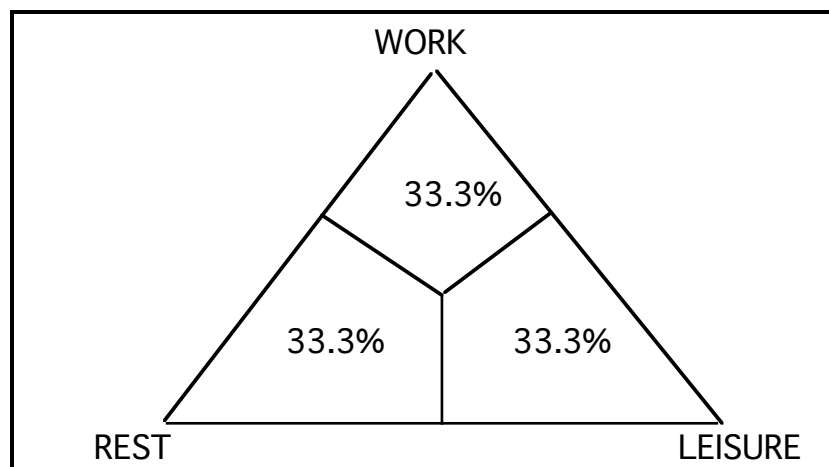
- Enjoy 20- 30 minutes exercise at least 4 times per week. Walking is an excellent activity.
- Leave the car at home and walk to the shops.
- Take up a new activity with a friend and encourage each other.

Adapted from the National Health Foundation (Qld Division Brochure): "Healthy Eating to Lose Weight".

## Part II: Ensure a Balanced Lifestyle

The simplest and possibly the most effective stress management principle is to lead a balanced lifestyle. If you divide up your week or shift schedule, about a third of the time should be spent on work, a third of the time should be spent on leisure, and a third of the time spent on rest.

What it should look like:



*Work:*

- What ever you do that constitutes your life's central activity (paid or unpaid).
- Domestic routine tasks that must be done in order to maintain order in your daily life.

*Leisure:*

- Relationships and activities you share with others: family, friends.
- Activities which allow you self satisfaction and enable you to express your uniqueness (e.g., hobbies).
- Sport and exercise.

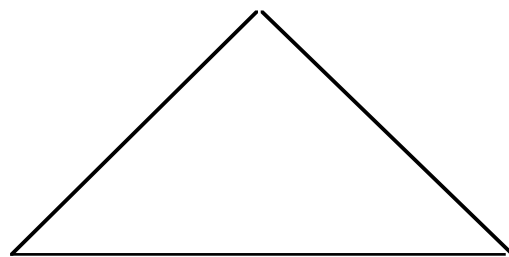
*Rest:*

- Sleep.
- Activities you do to relax and recharge your batteries.

In the triangles listed below write down the percentage of time you currently spend in each of these areas and also how you would like it to be.

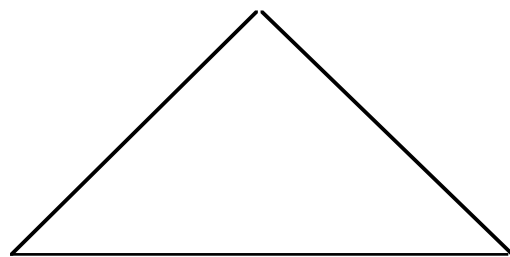
**AS IT IS:**

**AS YOU WOULD LIKE IT:**



REST

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REST

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### **Part III: Build and Maintain a Good Self-Esteem**

- Praise yourself when you do things well (you can't rely on others to do this).
- Catch and disarm your internal critic (your inner voice which is skilled in putting you down).
- When mistakes occur, force yourself to look at what you did well. Praise yourself for this. Then look at what you did not do as well as you had wished and ask yourself what could I do differently next time to achieve a better outcome.