



Strategies for Stress Management

Tiffany Wentz, MA, LMHC
EAP Counselor

Strategies for Stress Management



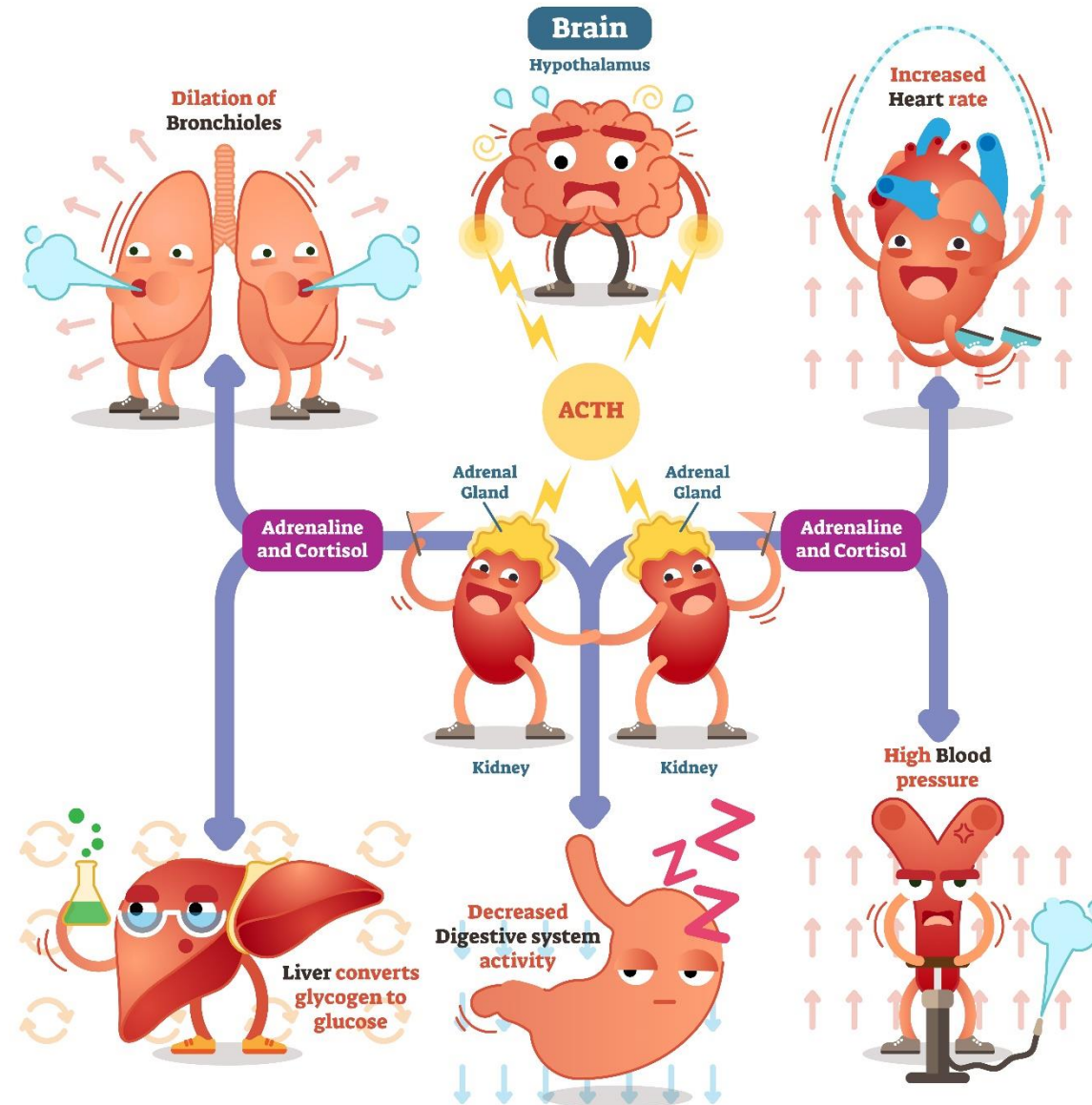
Defining Stress

Physical and emotional response to change

- Body is designed to experience it
- Can be “good” or “bad”
- Activates “fight, flight, or freeze” response



STRESS RESPONSE SYSTEM



Symptoms of Stress

- Anxiety/Depression
- Headaches
- Over/under eating
- Restlessness
- Burnout
- Substance use
- Isolation
- Loss of focus
- Fatigue
- Anger/Irritability



Circle of Control



Vulnerabilities

Physical or emotional conditions

Impact our ability to respond effectively

Can be reduced

Impact ability manage stress



Managing Vulnerabilities

- Exercise
- Eat regular, balanced meals
- Establish a good sleep schedule
- Avoid substance use
- Engage in self-care
- Engage in community (social, religious or spiritual)



Create Work/Life Balance

- Leave work at the “office”.
- Create a transition time.
- Practice being present.
- Avoid multi-tasking.
- Make time for mental “freedom”.



Create an “end of day” practice

1. Write tomorrow’s “to-do”
2. Identify priorities and create a plan for your day
3. Send final emails
4. Turn off computer and tidy your workstation
5. Take a few deep breaths and consciously release the work day
6. adopt an end of day affirmation



Shift your thinking

Avoid

- "I can't handle this"
- All or nothing thinking
- Catastrophizing

Practice

- How can I handle this?
- See to find balance
- Focus on what is



Vagus Nerve



- Nerve that connects brain, stomach, and many other parts of body
- Part of parasympathetic nervous system
- Can be stimulated to help combat stress.

Stimulate Vagus Nerve

- Cold stimulation – apply cold water to your face or back of neck
- Singing or humming
- Yoga
- Massages
- Laughing
- Supplements
- Paced Breathing



Paced Breathing

Used to decrease heartrate and emotional intensity.

Instructions:

1. Breath from belly
2. Slow your pace of breathing
3. Exhale longer than you inhale



mindfulness

EAP Is Here To Support You

- Free for you and your family
- Confidential
- Easy to access
- Expert professionals
- From workplace concerns to everyday concerns to serious issues
- Practical help
- Caring and respectful
- Culturally relevant
- Supporting the WHOLE person



WASHINGTON STATE

How Do You Access EAP Services?



WASHINGTON STATE

eap.wa.gov
877-313-4455

*No-cost, confidential support to help with work
and life challenges.*

Resources

- [A Mindful State](#) -Washington
- [Find Your Words](#) -Kaiser
- [Finding Balance: Stress Management Guide](#) -Kaiser
- [Finding Balance Workbook](#) –Kaiser
- [Mental and Emotional Well-Being](#) - Washington
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) -Washington
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- [Understanding the Stress Response](#) –Harvard Medical School
- [WA Listens](#) or call 1-833-681-0211
- [WA Warm Line](#) or call 1-877-500-9276





Washington State EAP is accessible, free, and confidential.
Contact us at 877-313-4455 or visit our website at eap.wa.gov