Intro into stress management
Today’s Presenter

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Welcome from GEHA!

Government Employees Health Association
- 82+ years.
- We want you to “Do Your Possible” no matter where you are in life.
- One of the largest medical and dental plan carriers exclusively for federal employees.
- More than 2 million members.
- Worldwide network of doctors, dentists, hospitals and other providers.
“Stress is a perceived threat (real or imagined) to one’s mind, body, spirit or emotions.”
Stress

- Stressors
- Eustress
- Distress – acute and chronic
Your body’s response to stress

General Adaptation Syndrome

- Phase 1: Alarm reactions (mobilize resources)
- Phase 2: Resistance (cope with stressor)
- Phase 3: Exhaustion (reserves depleted)

The body’s resistance to stress can only last so long before exhaustion sets in.
Long-term effects

Physical effects

> Cardiovascular disease
  - Increases heart rate, blood pressure, heart attack and stroke.

> Weight gain

> Hair loss

> Diabetes (particularly type 2)

> Digestive problems
Long-term effects

- Impaired immunity
- Reduced libido
- Chronic pain (muscle tension)
- General sense of fatigue
- Insomnia
Mental and emotional effects

- Depression
- Decreased interest in appearance
- Obsessive/compulsive behavior
- Reduced work efficiency or productivity
- Social withdrawal and isolation
Mental and emotional effects

- Feel irritated or frustrated, lose your temper more often, and yell at others for no reason
- Feel jumpy or exhausted all the time
- Find it hard to concentrate or focus on tasks
- Worry too much about insignificant things
- Doubt your ability to do things
Job stress – causes

- Lack of control
- Increased responsibility
- Job satisfaction and performance
- Uncertainty about work roles
- Poor communication
- Lack of support
- Poor working conditions
What can you do about stress?

1. Find out what is causing your stress
2. Look for ways to reduce the stress in your life
3. Learn coping skills

Effective coping skills
To increase your awareness of the issue and work toward a peaceful resolution.
Effective coping skills – time/job management

- Use a planning tool
- Schedule your time appropriately
- Stop procrastinating
- Manage external time wasters
Effective coping skills – time/job management

> Job stress?
  – Learn to say “no”
  – Get organized
  – Avoid multitasking
  – Delegate
  – Unplug!
Effective coping skills – engage in conversation

- Talk with a friend
- You may help each other destress
- Job stress
  - Meet with your boss
Effective coping skills – comic relief

> Laughter is the best medicine!
> Laugh with a friend; double the laughter means double the stress relief
Effective coping skills – exercise

- Increase in endorphins
- Flush stress hormones out
Effective coping skills – Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

Alternative medicine practices are those not typically used in conventional medicine.

Complementary medicine = alternative practices and conventional therapies together.
Effective coping skills – relaxation techniques

- Progressive muscular relaxation
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Aromatherapy
- Self talk
- Chakra
- Yoga
Effective coping skills – relaxation techniques

- Guided mental imagery
- Autogenic training
- Body scanning
- Meditation
- Massage
- Tai chi
Make stress work for you

➢ Belief is powerful
➢ Reach for balance in your life, strive for some good stress every now and then
   – Good stress is stress we feel when we feel excited
➢ Reward yourself
Online stress assessments

**AIS (American Institute of Stress)**

> Assessments available:
  - Stress 360
  - Workplace Stress Survey
  - Stress Sensitivity Scale
  - Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory
  - Stress and Well Being Survey
  - StressCom, and more

**MHA (Mental Health America)**

**NYSUT (New York State United Teachers)**
Questions?