

# 3 Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques

**Patient name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Admission:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- I. The client/caregiver can define stress.**
  - A. It is a pressure or a strain caused by a real or perceived threat.
  - B. It can cause mental, physical, intellectual, emotional, and/or spiritual consequences.
  - C. It creates a physical reaction in which hormones are released, causing symptoms such as tense muscles, pounding heart, increase in blood pressure, cold clammy hands, and tense stomach.
  - D. Prolonged or chronic stress can be particularly harmful.
  
- II. The client/caregiver can list benefits of stress.**
  - A. Increases concentration
  - B. Increases alertness
  - C. Improves performance
  - D. Increases strength
  - E. Provides incentive for accomplishment
  
- III. The client/caregiver can list bad effects of stress.**
  - A. Chronic fatigue and sleep disturbances
  - B. Increased pulse, blood pressure, and respirations
  - C. Constipation, diarrhea, or ulcers
  - D. Chronic back pain, headache, and stiff neck
  - E. Increased susceptibility to disease
  - F. Loss of appetite, nausea, and weight loss
  
- IV. The client/caregiver can list methods to cope with stress.**
  - A. Identify stressors.
  - B. Attend support groups.
  - C. Have psychotherapy.
  - D. Simplify life.
  - E. Do not self-medicate with alcohol or drugs.
  - F. Promote better organizational skills.
    - 1. Delegate jobs to others.
    - 2. Use time management.

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- 3. Establish priorities.
  - 4. Learn to say “no.”
- G. Take care of the body.**
  - 1. Eat a well-balanced diet.
  - 2. Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco.
  - 3. Take vitamin and mineral supplements.
  - 4. Obtain adequate rest.
  - 5. Exercise regularly.
- H. Develop positive thinking.**
  - 1. Learn and practice assertiveness.
  - 2. Use good posture.
- I. Keep your expectations realistic.**
- J. Keep a sense of humor.**
  
- V. The client/caregiver can list techniques and activities that may decrease stress.**
  - A. Mental imagery/visualization
  - B. Progressive muscle relaxation
  - C. Meditation
  - D. Biofeedback
  - E. Aromatherapy
  - F. Deep breathing exercises
  - G. Massage
  - H. Therapeutic touch
  - I. Stretching
  - J. Walking
  - K. Gardening
  - L. Spending time with pet
  - M. Hot baths
  - N. Listening to music
  - O. Reading
  - P. Physical activities such as swimming
  
- VI. The client/caregiver can list stress management techniques that have been used in other countries many years ago and are now becoming popular in our society.**
  - A. Acupuncture uses needles at certain points on the body to promote the flow of energy.
  - B. Acupressure uses application of pressure on certain points on the body to promote flow of energy.

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- C. Reflexology is the use of pressure on specific areas of the foot or hand that corresponds to body organs.
- D. Shiatsu is a form of manipulation to correct internal malfunctioning.
- E. Aroma therapy is the use of essential oils to promote healing.
- F. Massage has been used in many countries to reduce stress and pain.

**RESOURCES**

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine  
<http://nccam.nih.gov/>

Counseling/clergy

Support groups

Health clubs

YMCA

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