

FITTING ALL THE PIECES

Central Michigan District Health Department
HIV/AIDS Case Management Program

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Does Stress Have You Worried Sick?

Stress is a normal, unavoidable part of our lives. Although we usually think of stressful situations as also being negative situations, this is not always the case as anyone who has gotten married, had a child, or taken a new job can tell you. Too much stress, however, can significantly affect the quality of your health and life.

There are two types of stress. Acute stress is our body's reaction to immediate and short-term events. We usually recover quickly from these, but even this short-lived stress can cause problems if it becomes frequent or if we don't have adequate time to recover between events. This type of stress is usually the cause of muscle tension, rapid heartbeats, backaches, rapid breathing, excessive sweating, nausea, difficulty concentrating, and feelings of irritability, and nervousness.

Chronic stress usually continues over a long period of time and causes the most serious problems. High blood pressure, arrhythmia, hardening of the arteries, muscle pain, painful menstruation, decreased fertility, and erectile difficulties all can be attributed to chronic stress. It has also been linked to coronary artery disease, heart attacks, heart failure, gastro esophageal reflux disease, peptic ulcers, and irritable bowel syndrome. And if that isn't enough, it can also worsen asthma symptoms, acne, and psoriasis and weakens the immune system.

Because we are in charge of our mind and body wellness, we can stop stress from harming our body. There are many ways to reduce the effects of stress. **Write** in a journal 10-15 minutes each day about the stressful events in your life and how you felt. **Exercise** consistently every day.



Clinic Dates

May 9, 2008
9:00am—4:00pm

June 27, 2008
9:00 am—4:00pm

July 25, 2008
9:00am—4:00pm

Clinic is located on the 2nd floor of the court-house in Harrison. Look for the Family Planning clinic sign

Remember that our office will be closed May 15th and May 26th. Enjoy the spring weather!

Catrina's Corner



Wow! What an exciting few months it has been. There have been so many additions to our program and I'd like to welcome each person who has enrolled with our agency.

I'm happy to announce that Dr. Gulick will be in Harrison for his first clinic this month. For those of you who have not had the pleasure of meeting him, let me just say that he is incredibly compassionate and passionate about his work. I have no doubt that you all will be very pleased with your care.

We also will be having our first support group on May 19th. I hope to see each of you there to help guide the direction this group will take.

As you can see, we also have begun a monthly newsletter. Suggestions of content are welcome. This then leads me to the topic of the month. Change, good or bad, certainly is stressful and it definitely takes a toll on our physical and mental well-being. For those of you who have known me for a while now, you probably would definitely say that I deal with my stress by talking and laughing, but there are also lots of other ways to help ease those stressful feelings. Read this newsletter for other great tips on staying stress free.

As always, please feel free to call me to chit chat anytime you'd like. I hope to see you all soon at the support group.

Commitment To Change

Ready.

Willing..

And Able...

Making Health A Priority

Does Stress Have You Worried Sick...continued

Find a **hobby** that you enjoy. Treat yourself to a **massage** especially of the neck and shoulders where muscles experience the most tension due to stress. Use **aromatherapy** to help soothe and relax your body. **Meditate** by sitting quietly and breathing slowly and regularly 15-20 minutes and focusing on a single image, sound, mantra, or focusing on all your thoughts, feelings, sounds, and images. Listen to or make **music**. The rhythm and tone can help relax your body and mind. **Laugh** often. It has been shown to boost the immune system and lower blood pressure. Finally, have a

positive attitude. Our attitude in life determines how much stress will affect our body. So try one of the many ways to relieve stress and don't let stress make you worried sick.



Twenty Ways To Simplify Your Life

1. Eliminate ten things from your life
2. Cut back on television
3. Escape to a quiet spot
4. Set your own pace
5. Get rid of clutter
6. When you bring in something new, throw out something old
7. Do only one thing at a time
8. Say no at least once a day
9. Enjoy the little things
10. Take at least four breaks per day
11. Determine what really matters
12. Make peace with all people
13. Tell the truth
14. Appreciate beauty
15. If you don't need it, don't buy it
16. If you don't have time, don't do it
17. Have a place for everything and put everything in its place
18. Share your thoughts, feelings, and opinions with a friend every day
19. Allow time to meditate
20. Be thankful for what you have

Support Groups

Our very first support group will be held on May 19th, 2008 and each third Monday of the month from then on. We need everyone to attend and give their input about the direction and content that this support group should have. We look forward to seeing everyone there. Please call Catrina at 989-539-6731 ext. 21 for location and directions.



What are you doing to save time?