

Managing Stress in Seniors

We all experience a little stress from time to time. It's somewhat easy to handle when we're young. But, as we age, coping with stress becomes more difficult. **What's different about coping with stress as we age?**

Our bodies cells are aging. Heart fitness and lung capacity decline, especially if we are not physically active. This keeps the body from having a natural response to stress.

Some Stressors that can Negative Impact Seniors

Some stressors that may affect seniors are: medical conditions, loss of independence, financial concerns, physical weakness memory loss, too much unconstructed time, lack of companionship.

Symptoms of Stress

Symptoms of stress may include headaches, indigestion, heart palpitations, poor concentration, difficulty speaking, anxiety, mood changes, and/or overeating.

Talk with your family or a close friend if you're feeling stressed and consider seeing your physician. You may be unaware that stress may be having a physical impact on your health. Be sure that you are eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of exercise, doing activities that you enjoy and making time to socialize.

A big part of managing stress focuses on knowing the opposite of stress, which is the relaxation response. This response lowers blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate, oxygen consumption, and stress hormones. **Techniques to release stress may include yoga, chair yoga, meditation, guided imagery, and deep breathing. "Turn negative thoughts into positive ones".**

. The American Institute of Stress

. Benson-Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine

