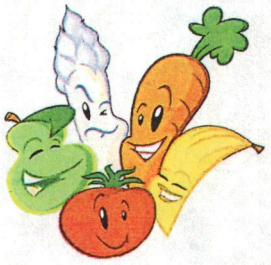


HEALTHY YOUNIVERSITY

STRESS

Welcome to Healthy yoUniversty! For 8 weeks we will be exploring ways to exercise our mind and body with skills that will enable us to reclaim a healthy balance in our lives. Each week, you will receive a packet of information that focuses on a different health topic. The first page of the packet has four tickets with activities based on the information in the rest of the packet. Complete as many of these activities as you like. Then fill out the tickets for the completed activities, cut them apart, and submit them in the box located at our Information Desk. For every ticket you submit, you will receive an entry in to our drawing to win a $50 Amazon Gift Card. Good Luck!

Read the Stress Packet

Name:_____ **Phone Number:** _____

Try the Stress-Busting One Day Menu

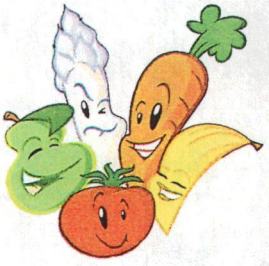
Name:_____ **Phone Number:** _____

Go for a hike in nature

Name:_____ **Phone Number:** _____

Do 5 minutes of meditation every day for a week

Name:_____ **Phone Number:** _____



HEALTHY YOUNIVERSITY

STRESS

What is stress?

Stress can be defined as the brain's response to any demand. Many things can trigger this response, including change. Changes can be positive or negative, as well as real or perceived. They may be recurring, short-term, or long-term and may include things like commuting to and from school or work every day, traveling for a yearly vacation, or moving to another home. Changes can be mild and relatively harmless, such as winning a race, watching a scary movie, or riding a rollercoaster. Some changes are major, such as marriage or divorce, serious illness, or a car accident. Other changes are extreme, such as exposure to violence, and can lead to traumatic stress reactions. (Taken from: https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml)

How does stress affect the body?

Not all stress is bad. All animals have a stress response, which can be life-saving in some situations. The nerve chemicals and hormones released during such stressful times, prepares the animal to face a threat or flee to safety. When you face a dangerous situation, your pulse quickens, you breathe faster, your muscles tense, your brain uses more oxygen and increases activity—all functions aimed at survival. In the short term, it can even boost the immune system.

However, with chronic stress, those same nerve chemicals that are life-saving in short bursts can suppress functions that aren't needed for immediate survival. Your immunity is lowered and your digestive, excretory, and reproductive systems stop working normally. Once the threat has passed, other body systems act to restore normal functioning. Problems occur if the stress response goes on too long, such as when the source of stress is constant, or if the response continues after the danger has subsided.

There are at least three different types of stress, all of which carry physical and mental health risks:

- Routine stress related to the pressures of work, family and other daily responsibilities.
- Stress brought about by a sudden negative change, such as losing a job, divorce, or illness.
- Traumatic stress, experienced in an event like a major accident, war, assault, or a natural disaster where one may be seriously hurt or in danger of being killed.

The body responds to each type of stress in similar ways. Different people may feel it in different ways. For example, some people experience mainly digestive symptoms, while others may have headaches, sleeplessness, depressed mood, anger and irritability. People under chronic stress are prone to more frequent and severe viral infections, such as the flu or common cold, and vaccines, such as the flu shot, are less effective for them.

Of all the types of stress, changes in health from routine stress may be hardest to notice at first. Because the source of stress tends to be more constant than in cases of acute or traumatic stress, the body gets no clear signal to return to normal functioning. Over time, continued strain on your body from routine stress may lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, anxiety disorder, and other illnesses.

(Taken from: https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml)

Eustress = Good Stress: Acute / Short-Term

Acute or short-term stress results when the biological stress response is activated for minutes to hours. Acute or short-term stress can have protective and beneficial effects. The beneficial effects of short-term stress make sense because the fight-or-flight stress response is nature's fundamental survival mechanism.

Boosts natural immune system

Helps us adapt to change

Encourages creative thinking

Helps achieve goals / make deadlines

Enables us to handle emergency situations

Enables us to protect ourselves

Can translate to better mental & physical performance in daily tasks

Distress = Bad Stress: Chronic / Long Term

Chronic or long-term stress results when the biological stress response is activated for months to years. It can be due to one long-term stressor, like caring for someone who is chronically ill, or from numerous short-term stressors with insufficient time for a return to a resting state.

Impairment of brain structure and function

Increased biological aging

Suppression or abnormal regulation of immune function

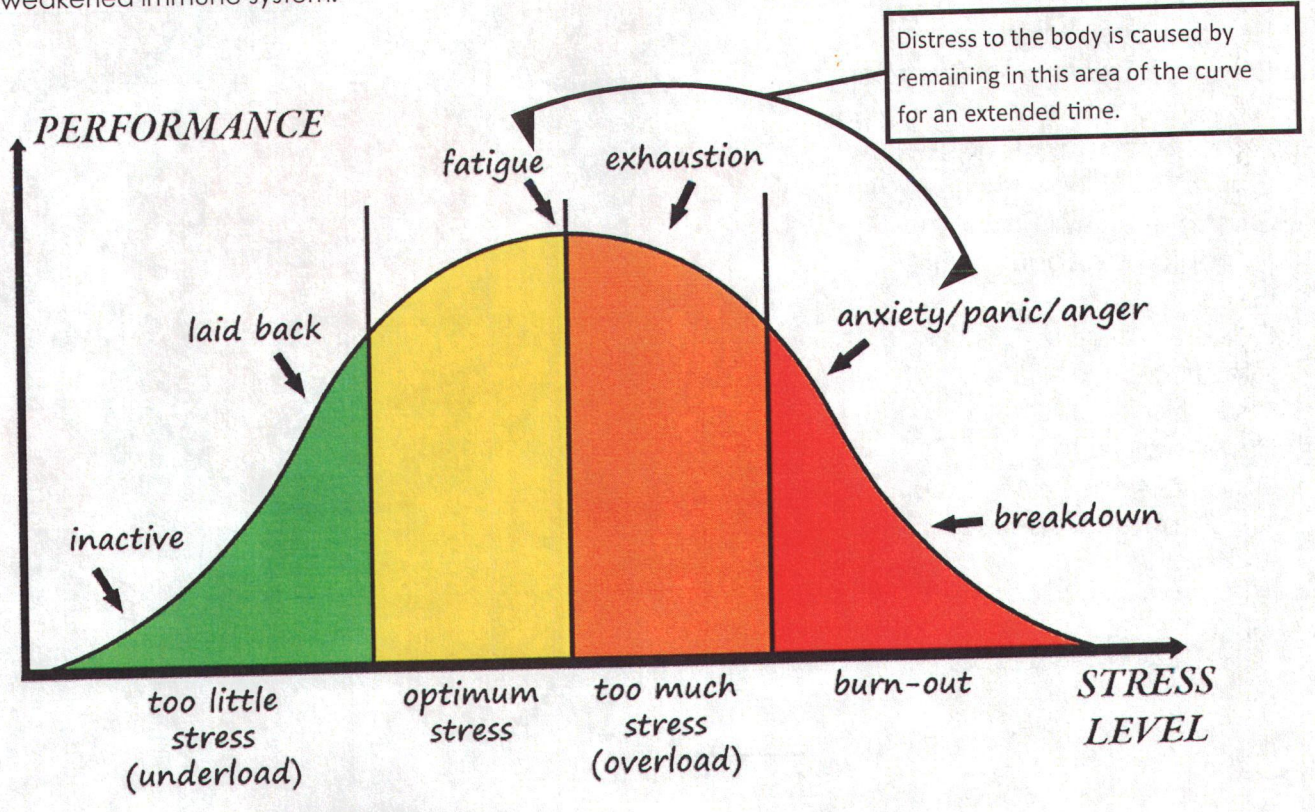
Increased susceptibility to infection and disease

Difficulty in performing regular tasks and coping with challenges

Moodiness, irritability, depression

Stress Curve

Our bodies were designed to ride this stress curve over short spans of time. If we incur continuous, multiple stressors without physical release, holding our systems in the "danger zone" between fatigue and panic, the fight or flight response begins to cause problems such as high blood pressure, high blood sugar, acid reflux, and a weakened immune system.



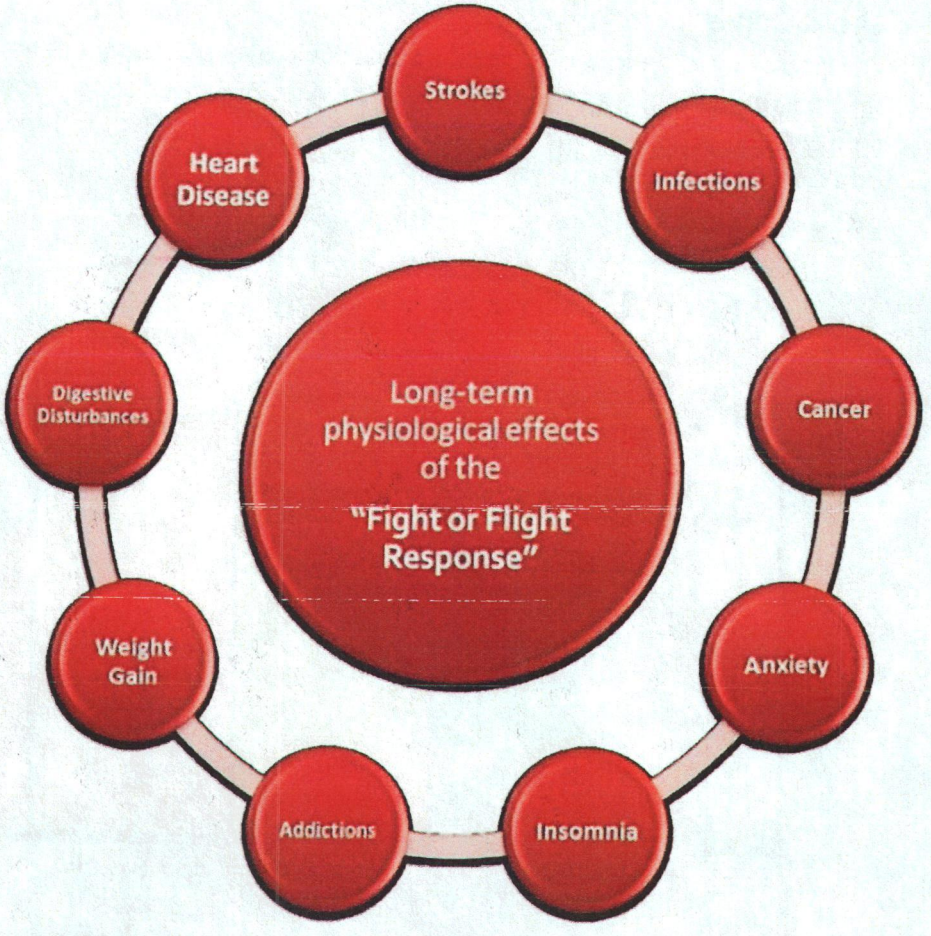
Warning Signs & Symptoms of Chronic Stress	
Cognitive Symptoms	**Emotional Symptoms**
Memory problems Inability to concentrate Poor judgement Seeing only the negative Anxious or racing thoughts Constant worrying	Moodiness Irritability or short temper Agitation, inability to relax Feeling overwhelmed Sense of loneliness or isolation Depression or general unhappiness
Physical Symptoms	**Behavioral Symptoms**
Aches & pains Diarrhea or constipation Nausea, dizziness Chest pain, rapid heartbeat Loss of sex drive Frequent colds	Eating more or less Sleeping too much or too little Isolating yourself from others Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities Using alcohol, cigarettes or drugs to relax Nervous habits (e.g., nail biting, pacing)

Just because you don't have obvious physical symptoms of stress doesn't mean you aren't experiencing it. Strokes, cancer, high cholesterol and diabetes are all silent killers associated with stress.

Studies estimate that as much as 80% of all known ailments are caused directly or indirectly by chronic stress!

Stress Related Illnesses

Heart Disease / Strokes
Asthma
Obesity
Headaches / Migraines
Depression / Anxiety Disorders
Alzheimer's Disease
Acne, Eczema, Psoriasis
Cancer
Gastrointestinal Problems (chronic heartburn, GERD, IBS)
Colds & Viruses
Infections
Insomnia
Fibromyalgia
Chronic Aches and Pains
Auto-Immune Diseases

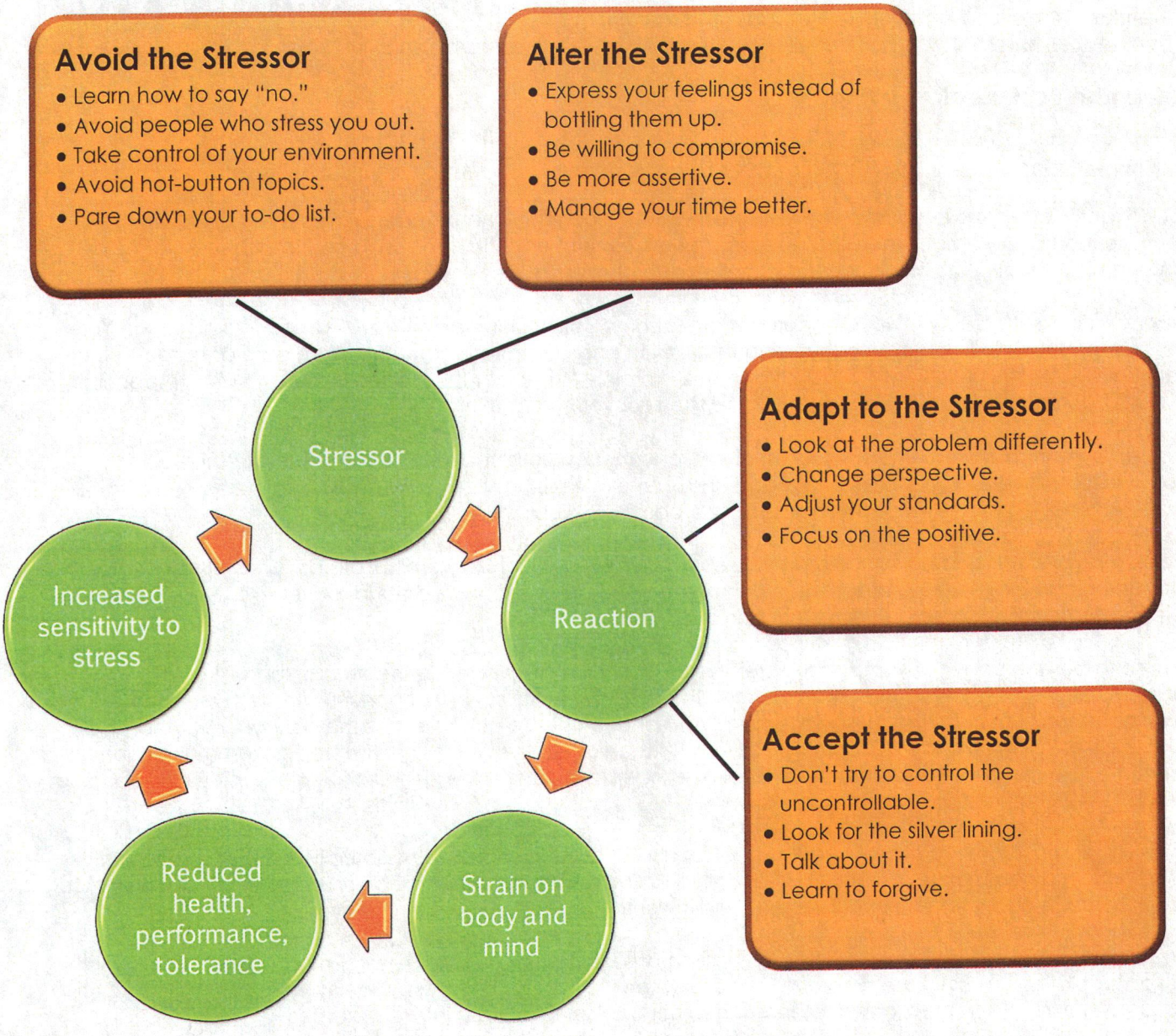


Breaking the Stress Cycle

Stress follows a cycle of events which circle around and around, each step increasing the severity of the next step. To break the stress patterns, you can interrupt the cycle at any point, but the cycle is most effectively broken by changing the stressor or our reaction to the stressor.

Stress management begins with identifying the sources of the stress in your life. Your true sources of stress aren't always obvious, and it's all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Sure, you may know that you're constantly worried about work deadlines. But maybe it's your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that leads to deadline stress. To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits, attitude, and excuses.

Try keeping a stress journal. Record the events that triggered stressed responses. Interrupt your own reactions and ask yourself why you are responding in that particular way. Look closely at your habits, attitudes, and excuses – Is it the event? Is it you? Write anything you did that made you feel better. Once you are aware of the causes of your stress, you can try any of the following tactics.



EXERCISE

Virtually any form of exercise, from aerobics to yoga, can act as a stress reliever. If you're not an athlete or even if you're down-right out of shape, you can still make a little exercise go a long way toward stress management.

Exercise:

- **pumps endorphins**
- **is meditation in motion**
- **reverses brain atrophy caused by stress**
- **improves endurance**
- **improves immune system**

Prevention: 14 Walking Workouts To Burn Fat And Boost Energy
http://www.prevention.com/fitness/fitness-tips/14-walking-workouts-burn-fat-and-boost-energy/walking-workout-head-trees

Huffington Post: Healthy Living

How Does Exercise Reduce Stress? by Meredith Melnick

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/21/exercise-reduces-stress-levels-anxiety-cortisol_n_3307325.html

How, exactly, does exercise make you less stressed out? Especially when exercise raises levels of the stress hormone, cortisol? We've all read that exercise lowers levels of anxiety, depression and stress. And that holds true even for people who are stressed out by the *idea* of exercise. But *how* exactly does it do that?

Exercise attacks stress in two ways, according to Matthew Stults-Kolehmainen, Ph.D., a kinesiologist at the Yale Stress Center. He told HuffPost Healthy Living that raising one's heart rate can actually reverse damage to the brain caused by stressful events: "Stress atrophies the brain -- especially the hippocampus, which is responsible for a lot, but memory in particular. When you're stressed, you forget things."

Exercise, by contrast, promotes production of neurohormones like norepinephrine that are associated with improved cognitive function, elevated mood and learning. And that can improve thinking dulled by stressful events -- some research even shows how exercise can make you smarter.

In fact, many researchers posit that improved communication could be the basis of both greater reserves of the neurochemicals that help the brain communicate with the body *and* the body's improved ability to respond to stress. The American Psychological Association reported:

Exercise forces the body's physiological systems -- all of which are involved in the stress response -- to communicate much more closely than usual: The cardiovascular system communicates with the renal system, which communicates with the muscular system. And all of these are controlled by the central and sympathetic nervous systems, which also must communicate with each other. This workout of the body's communication system may be the true value of exercise; the more sedentary we get, the less efficient our bodies in responding to stress.

But going for a rigorous jog or bike ride (or even for a walk or out dancing) can actually cause immediate stress reduction. On a common psychiatric metric, called PALMS, those who are tested immediately after working out rate higher for mood, memory and energy -- and lower for depression, tension and anxiety.

That's particularly surprising because, as our question-asker points out, rigorous exercise temporarily raises our level of circulating cortisol -- the hormone that rises when we experience stress. The key word in this instance is temporary: For most people, cortisol rates return to normal following even intense exercise.

YOGA

Yoga is a combination of breathing and postures with the purpose of realigning your mind and body. The benefits of yoga include decreased stress and tension, increased strength and balance, increased flexibility, lowered blood pressure and reduced cortisol levels. Yoga's emphasis on breathing and the mind/body/spirit connection also yields strong emotional benefits. People who practice yoga frequently report that they sleep better and feel less stressed. "It helps you learn not to concentrate on things you can't control, to live in the present," says Mindy Arbuckle, yoga teacher and owner of Green Mountain Yoga in Arvada, Colo. "It seeps into the rest your life. You'll notice you're handling a stressful event more easily, whether it's family or work."

- You do not have to be flexible to do yoga.
- There are easy classes for beginners, seniors and people with any kind of physical problem.
- Hatha yoga is most flowing and gentle.
- Many poses can be done right where you are or at night before you fall asleep.
- Concentrate on your breath.
- Everyone's pose will look different – don't worry about whether you are doing it "right."

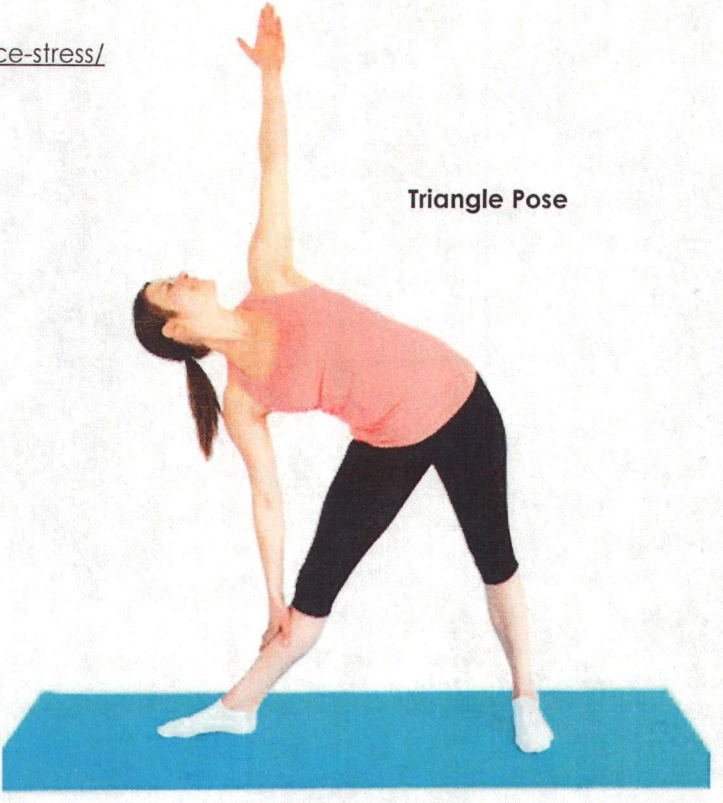
Huffington Post: 10 Yoga Poses for Stress
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/06/10-yoga-poses-for-stress-_n_3000801.html

American Yoga Association
http://www.americanyogaassociation.org/contents.html

CNN: 10 Yoga Pose to Beat Stress
http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/29/health/yoga-reduce-stress/

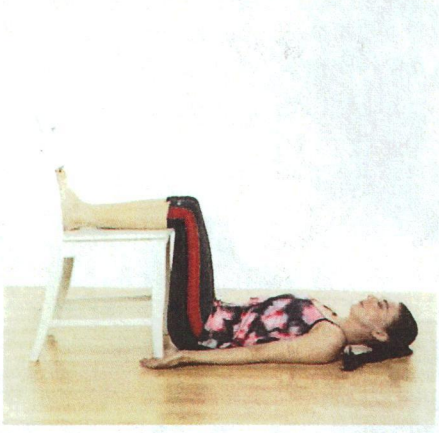
Standing Forward Bend

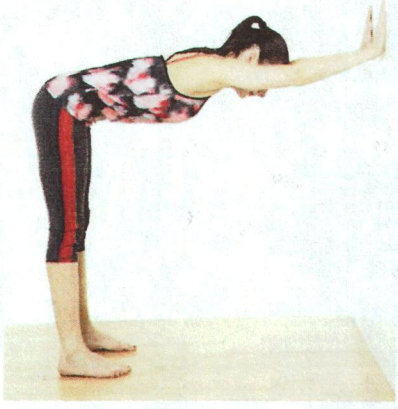
Triangle Pose

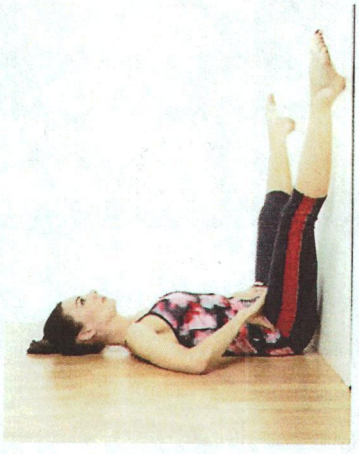


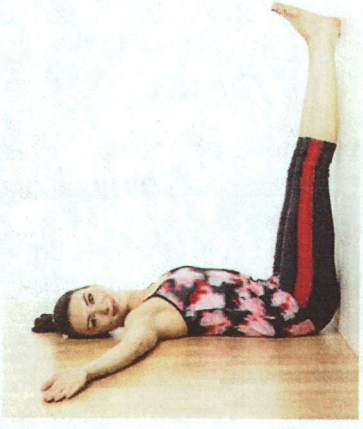
Divine Caroline: 10 Easy Yoga Exercises for Relieving Stress

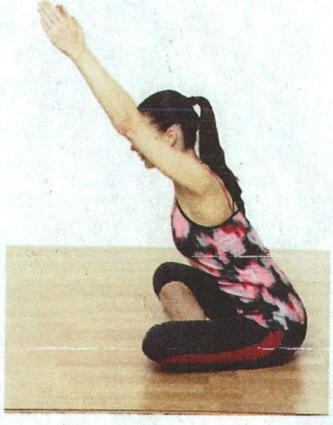
For detailed descriptions of each move, visit
http://www.divinecaroline.com/self/wellness/relieve-stress-yoga?page=10

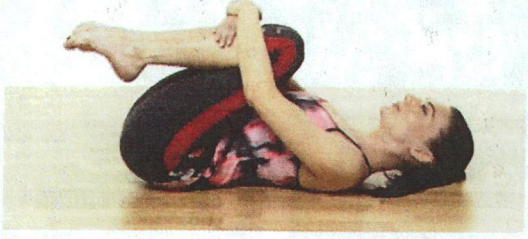


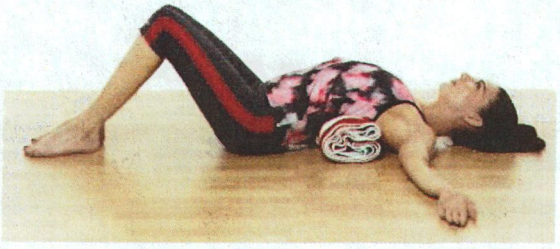


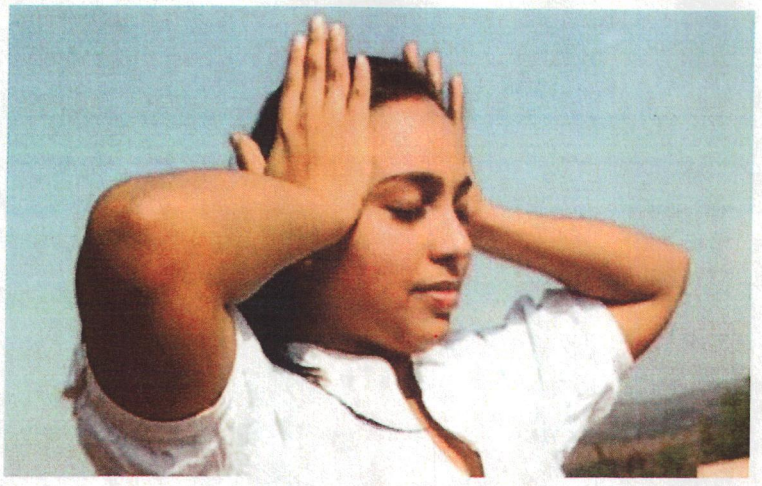












SUKSHMA YOGA

Sukshma Yoga takes no time or preparation. These little exercises open up subtle energy channels and in a session as short as 7 minutes, you can feel a highly palpable difference. Here are the instructions to do Sukshma Yoga exercises for face and head.

- Pinch your eyebrows 5-6 times using your thumb and the index figure.
- Roll your eyes 5-6 times clockwise and then anticlockwise.
- Squeeze your eyes tight and then open them wide. Repeat this for 10-15 times.
- Pull your ears for 10-15 seconds.
- Hold your ears and move them clockwise and anti-clockwise (as if riding a cycle) till your ears become hot.
- Move three fingers (first, middle, and ring finger) from the jaw line to chin and massage your cheeks. You could keep your mouth open as you do this.
- Open and close your jaw 8-10 times.
- Open your mouth and move your jaw side-to-side 8-10 times.
- Rotate your neck. Breathing in take your head back and breathing out touch your chin to chest. Rotate your head in clockwise direction. Breathe in as you go up (first half of the circle) and breathe out as you return to the starting position (second half of the circle). Repeat this 5-6 times in clockwise and counter clockwise.
- Shake your hands for 2 minutes.

Yoga Wiz: Your Quick Yoga Solution
http://www.yogawiz.com/articles/625/yoga-exercises/sukshma-yoga-quick-solutions.html

Yoga for Beginners: Sukshma Vyayam - Step by Step Information Regarding Joint Movements
http://www.yoga-for-beginners-a-practical-guide.com/sukshma-vyayam-step-by-step-information-regarding-joint-movements.html

Art of Living: Sukshma Yoga
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyFEOPp1BUY