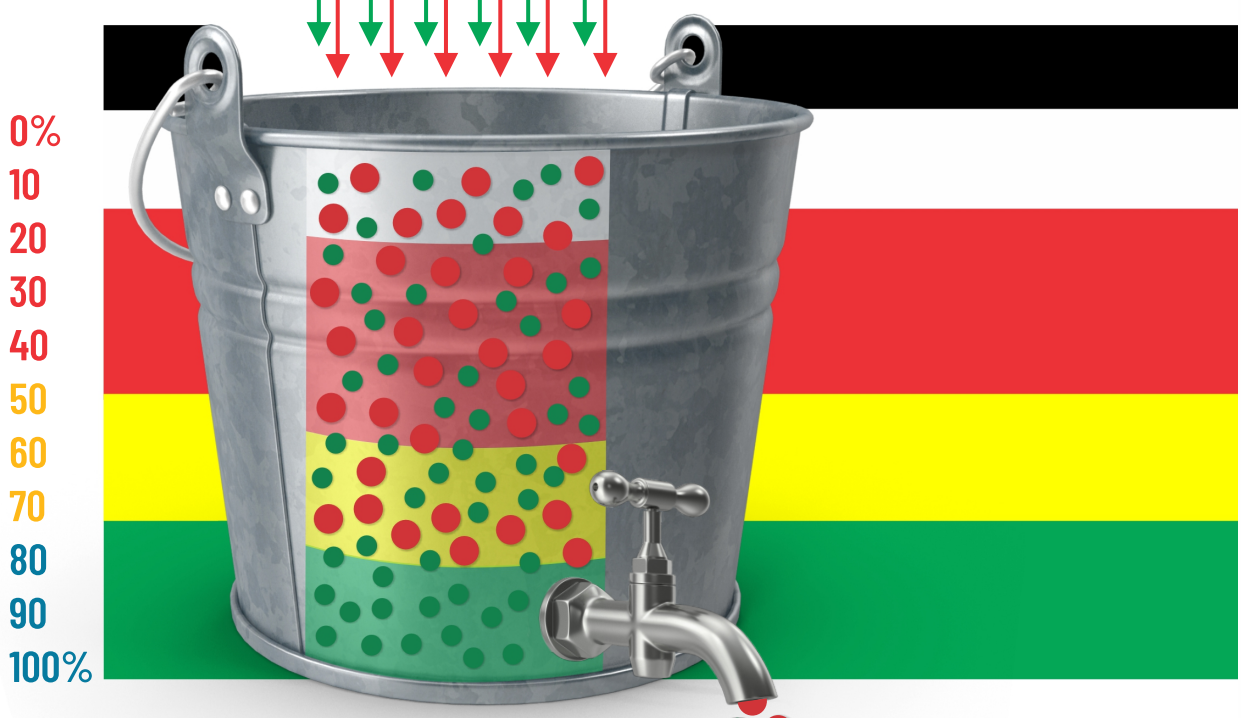
IS STRESS AFFECTING YOUR HEALTH?

PEAK POTENTIAL

WHY YOU NEED TO EMPTY YOUR BUCKET

STRESSORS

1. PHYSICAL
2. CHEMICAL
3. ELECTROMAGNETIC
4. PSYCHIC OR MENTAL
5. NUTRITION
6. THERMAL



P3 PEAK
POTENTIAL PROTOCOLS

All stressors accumulate together within your body, aka the bucket, and processed by your nervous system. The green arrows represent good stressors, while the red arrows signify bad stressors. Imagine accumulating all of your stressors for a week or a month. The higher your levels of stress, the harder it is on your body.

Is Stress Affecting Your Health?

Stress is very often the root of many people's problems, whether they recognize it or not. You'll often hear that someone is "under too much stress." You, too, may feel this way. But what exactly is stress? How can some withstand more stress than others? Is stress always a bad thing? Let's take a look.

What Is Stress?

You probably think of stress as inherently bad, but this isn't always the case. Just as bones and muscles need physical exercise to stay strong, we also need certain amounts of stress to stay healthy. A complete lack of stress would not be a good thing! There are six major types of stress, each of which can have "good" or "bad" effects.

1. **Physical stress**
2. **Chemical stress**
3. **Electromagnetic stress**
4. **Psychic or Mental stress**
5. **Nutritional stress**
6. **Thermal stress**

1. Physical stress

The Good: Physical stress in the form of move-ment or exercise is very beneficial. The actual stress comes from loading the muscles and bones of our body under the influence of gravity. Astronauts in space need regular exercise in order to counteract the loss of bone and muscle mass that occurs under zero gravity conditions.

Adequate movement and exercise also helps us to maintain an optimal metabolic rate, keeping us from becoming overweight. Considering that only about 8% of men and 3% of women exercise regularly, and that about 60% of Americans are overweight at present, you can see that we are in great need of more of this good stressor.

Metabolic Rate: The rate at which all physical and chemical processes take place within your body

The Bad: Over-exercising can be every bit as bad as not exercising enough. While under-exercising can contribute to becoming fat and sluggish inside, over-exercising can cause immune system suppression. This can lead to increased incidence of upper respiratory infection, chronic fatigue and a number of other maladies. Extreme exercise for athletes is often linked to poor performance and increased incidence of injury.

Another form of adverse physical stress is poor posture. Posture has a significant influence on breathing, muscle function, joint health, circulation and internal organ support. When the body structure is not in balance, the rest of the system follows.

2. Chemical stress

The Good: Our bodies are full of chemicals —naturally produced chemicals that are essential for health. The work of producing these key chemicals is a necessary stress for

the body. For example, when your body systems are working correctly, exercise results in chemical adaptations in the form of hormonal changes that alter your biochemistry to increase protein synthesis, energy production and myriad other chemical reactions. The action of sunlight on the skin results in the production of vitamin D and the regulation of the hormones melatonin and cortisol —both chemical reactions. Plant and animal foods (preferably raised organically) are made up of organic chemicals —vitamins, enzymes, proteins and fats that we need to survive.

The Bad: Today we are bombarded with thousands upon thousands of chemicals that were not around one hundred years ago. Many of these chemicals are synthetic, and our bodies do not have mechanisms to neutralize them. Synthetically manufactured medical drugs, such as aspirin, are among the most common forms of unfavorable chemi-cal stress. Other examples of dangerous chemical stressors are agricultural chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and certain fertilizers. These chemicals are often made from the same for-mulas used to make biological weapons, yet nearly two billion pounds of these chemicals are sprayed on our foods each year in the US alone. Many health problems have been linked to this form of chemical stress.

3. Electromagnetic stress

The Good: Certainly, my favorite form of electromagnetic stress is sunlight. Without sunlight, we wouldn't be alive. I'd say that qualifies sunlight as a good electromagnetic stress! The electromagnetic field of the earth is also a good form of this kind of stress. This invisible field helps control the rhythm of our hormones and other physiological functions. A common example of the earth's electromagnetic effects can be experienced when weather patterns change. At the onset of a thunderstorm, many people feel changes in their joints, muscles and even their moods.

The Bad: The most obvious form of bad electromagnetic stress is overexposure to sunlight, resulting in sunburn. In Australia and New Zealand, the ultraviolet rays are poorly filtered by the thin ozone layer. This means you can begin to burn in under 12 minutes on a summer day. Most people know that overexposure to radiation such as medical X-rays can also be harmful to your health. Often overlooked is the extremely low frequency (ELF) pollution emitted by electronic devices such as computers, cell phones, microwave ovens, electric motors, your TV and even an electric blanket. Many of these forms of stress are insidious, causing dysfunction in your hormonal and autonomic nervous systems.

4. Psychic or Mental stress

The Good: Thinking and using your mind productively represents good psychic or mental stress. Having a plan or setting goals in your life and doing the work to achieve them is also a positive form of this stress. Other examples include overcoming adversity to become a stronger, better person. Without psychic stress, our minds would not develop fully.

The Bad: A common form of bad psychic stress is focusing on things that you don't want in life instead of what you do want —what I call "Stinking Thinking." Other forms of psychic stress include verbal abuse from others, studying so much that your

mental faculties begin to diminish, and challenging religious or spiritual beliefs that are imposed upon you —even if self imposed. Being rushed or taking on more work or responsibility than you can manage will also produce unhealthy psychic stress.

5. Nutritional Stress

The Good: Eating organic foods and not over- or under-eating are all representative of good nutritional stress. In these instances, the term stress is used to indicate the stress of digestion, assimilation and metabolizing of foods. For example, your body must be stressed with the challenge of extracting the nutrition from your food or it will become lazy, much like a person's muscles become lazy if you put them in a sling or cast and don't use them.

The Bad: Eating too much, too little or eating the wrong food proportions for your Bio-Individual Diet Type are unhealthy forms of nutritional stress. Consuming foods with toxins such as pesticides, herbicides, food preservatives, colorings, thickeners, emulsifiers and the like can be very stressful to the body as well. In my opinion, this type of stress from food is responsible for a large percentage of disease today.

6. Thermal stress

The Good: Maintaining your body temperature at 98.6°F (37°C) is the most obvious of the good thermal stressors. When it's hot or cold outside, the thermoregulatory system is stressed in order to keep your internal temperature constant. It's good to stress this system now and again to maintain its dynamic capacity.

The Bad: Anything that burns you is a form of adverse thermal stress! In addition, the opposite thermal stress would be anything that brings your body temperature too low for an extended period of time.

What Stress Does To Your Body

The six types of stress described above can be broken down into two groups, internal and external.

External stressors

External stressors are things that stress the body from the outside, such as sunlight, physical pain (caused by injury or other external forces) emotional trauma and toxic chemical exposure.

Internal stressors

Internal stressors come from within the body and are most often the reaction to external stressors. For example, if you're repeatedly exposed to toxic chemicals, cancer or other diseases may develop. Even if the toxic chemicals are removed, cancer will continue to stress the body systems. If you're in an unhappy relationship, an external situation, you'll experience a chronic stress response within the body. Chronic stressors cause elevated stress hormones in the body, leading to immune suppression, the inability to heal and eventually to disease.

Stress is perceived or interpreted by key control systems of the body —limbic/emotional, hormonal, visceral, nervous, musculo-skeletal and subsystems. The green arrows, as shown on page 2, represent good stressors that are used by the body to regulate and maintain optimal bodily function. The bad or excessive

stressors (red arrows) can throw the body out of balance. The nervous system plays an important role here. All the stressors are funneled together and processed by the nervous system to create an over-all stress picture in the body. As shown on page 2, you will stay in the Green Zone (in homeostasis, or balance) if the total stress picture is favorable for your body. When in this zone, response to external stressors such as exercise is favorable. The ability to bounce back from potentially damaging stressors is also much improved.

If for any reason the sum of all the stressors places too great a demand on your body, you'll begin to fall out of balance and move into the Yellow Zone. If you don't make the necessary changes to reduce the primary stress or stressors, your body begins to break down and you progressively move into the Red Zone. Your ability to cope with external stress-ors such as exercise is progressively diminished, as is your ability to tolerate internal stressors, such as exercise is progressively diminished, as is your ability to tolerate internal stressors, such as disease. The further you get into the Red Zone, the more easily disease will be able to take hold. This is where the saying "stress kills" comes from.

Nerves Of Steel

There are many sayings that link stress and your nerves together: My nerves are frayed. You're getting on my nerves! My nerves can't handle this! As indicated above, the nervous system plays an important role in evaluating and processing stress in the body. A brief explanation of how the nervous system works will help clarify how stress affects your body.

The nervous system is a combination of two systems that work together. The peripheral nervous system controls conscious movement and the central nervous system, which contains the autonomic nervous system, controls those actions in the body that you don't normally regulate through conscious thought, such as digesting and eliminating food, releasing hormones, sweating and the regulating of blood flow to different muscles and organs.

The autonomic nervous system is further split into two branches: the sympathetic and the parasympathetic. When activated, the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) produces a fight-or-flight response. Whenever threatened, our natural inclination is either "fight" to protect ourselves, or "flight"—to run for our lives. A potentially stressful situation will activate the SNS and prepare your body for fighting or running by producing the following responses, among others, within your body:

- **Release of stress hormones that elevate your heart rate and blood pressure.**
- **Shunting of blood away from your internal organs to the skin and muscles—greatly reducing or stopping all digestive and eliminative processes.**
- **Increased sweating.**

You've probably experienced these responses when suddenly faced with a frightening or challenging situation.

The SNS is often referred to as the catabolic (tissue destructive) system. When your fight-or-flight response is activated, levels of the stress hormone cortisol are elevated. If cortisol levels are above normal, your growth and repair

hormones are suppressed. Long-term over-production of cortisol leads to a break down of body tissues and fatigue of the adrenal glands. As the adrenals fatigue, the body is unable to maintain balance between stress and immune hormones, which leads to immune system dysfunction. Many years of chronic stress results in disease and premature death.

Sympathetic Nervous System: Part of the autonomic nervous system, which when activated (often as a response to stress) results in the release of stress hormones, increasing your heart rate and blood pressure while decreasing digestive and repair processes—often referred to as a "fight-or-flight" response.

Parasympathetic Nervous System: Part of the autonomic nervous system which supports digestive and repair processes, opposes the effects of the sympathetic nervous system.

When repeatedly stressed, you're continually mobilizing your energy reserves for immediate use. At the same time, the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) is suppressed. The PNS stimulates digestion, metabolism and the release of tissue building hormones (DHEA, growth hormone, testosterone, estrogen and others). If the PNS is constantly shut down, you'll be unable to effectively digest foods and repair your body. This over–stimulation of the SNS is a common cause of many chronic fatigue states and chronic disease processes, not to mention emotional imbalances and distress.

If someone wishes for good health, one must first ask oneself is he is ready to do away with the reasons for his illness.

This is your reminder
that your body
is the only
one you have,
treat it well.

PEAK POTENTIAL

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