

GOOD STRESS/BAD STRESS

Why Some Stress Is Good For You

Many people think of stress as another way of saying tension or pressure. Actually, stress is just the way we respond to change. Understanding stress and its effects can help you use it to your own advantage, and turn potential "stressors" into positive challenges.

The Mechanics Of Stress

Stress is defined as a response by your body to any demand made upon it. Your body responds to stress in many ways.

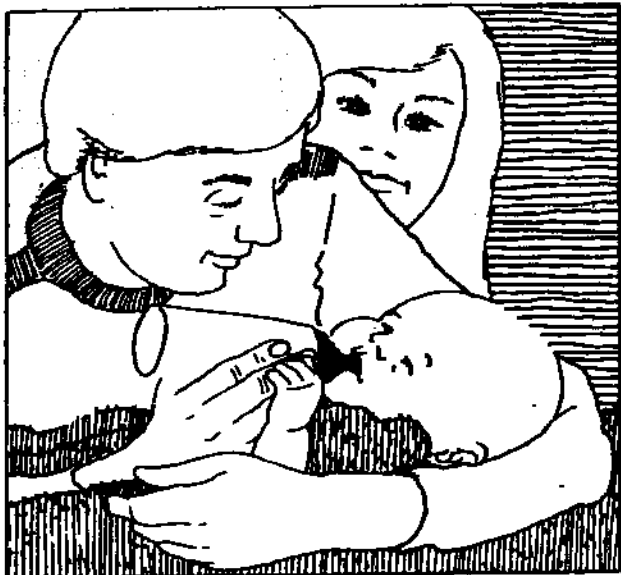
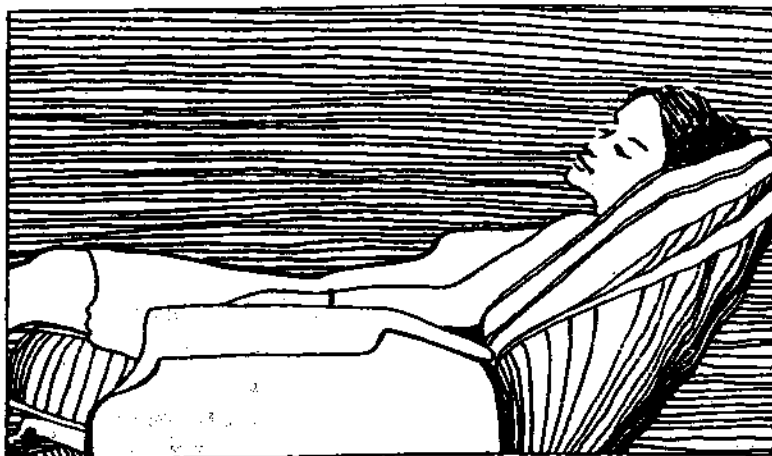
Hormones, like adrenalin, surge. Your heartbeat and blood pressure increase. Your blood sugar rises. These effects, unchanged for thousands of years, helped prehistoric humans survive by helping them run away faster or fight harder, which is why we often call our body's reaction to stress the "fight or flight" response.

Positive & Negative

Most people think of stressors, or things that cause stress, as negative, such as traffic, a difficult job, or divorce. Many people are aware of tense muscles, headaches or stomach aches during, before or after such situations.

But stressors can also be positive experiences. Having a baby,

Balance stress with time for relaxation.



Positive stress can make your life satisfying.

bowling a perfect 300 game, or completing a satisfying project are all changes that can activate your stress response.

The Effects of Stress

Your body can't tell the difference between a positive or negative

stressor. In either case, your body experiences the same stress effects. If you are not able to let off steam and relax, these effects can be harmful. You may feel tired, depressed, or anxious. You may experience physical symptoms such as a clenched jaw or backache. During periods of stress, take care of yourself by getting plenty of rest, eating healthily, exercising, and relaxing without alcohol or drugs. Help your body recover from all stress, even when you feel satisfied or excited, to protect your health.

Use Stress To Your Advantage

Stress is like body temperature: if it's too low or too high, you can't survive, but the right balance can keep you going strong. It makes sense to use stress energy positively, to meet life's challenges, experiences, and goals. Stress is not all bad. In fact, positive stress can make life both rich and satisfying.