STRESS FACT SHEET

What is stress?

• Stress is an emotional/bodily reaction to physical, psychological or emotional demands.
• Stress is a fact of life.
  — Managed stress can become useful and healthy. (Viewing events as challenges.)
  — Unmanageable stress can become stressful and unhealthy. (Viewing events as threats.)

What are some of the causes of stress?

• Expectations we place on ourselves.
• Expectations of others.
• Your physical environment
  — noise, lack of sleep, weather, season changes.
• Your internal environment
  — academic pressure, frustration, not enough time, decisions, social life.

What are some symptoms of unmanaged stress?

• Increased heart rate and blood pressure: feeling tense, irritable, fatigued, or depressed.
• Lack of interest and ability to concentrate, apathy.
• Avoidance behaviors: abuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex.

What are some ways to manage stress effectively?

• Add balance to life: don't overdo studies or play.
• Know and accept what kind of person you are: strengths and weaknesses.
• Take "time outs" especially during study.
• Study each subject regularly for moderate periods of time.
• Learn and practice relaxation skills.
• Expand your support network, reinforce friendships.
• Exercise regularly.
• Watch your breathing.
• Walk loosely and walk more.
• Discuss problems with friends, family, a dean or counselor.
• Get a thorough physical exam.

For more information visit http://go.middlebury.edu/lr

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