

# Stress

Stress is **a feeling of emotional or physical tension**.

- ✓ It can come from any event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous.
- ✓ Stress is your body's reaction to a challenge or demand.

## **Emotional signs of stress**

- Irritation or mood swings
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Feeling unmotivated
- Loneliness and isolation

## A Model of Stress

### Potential sources

Environmental factors

- Economic uncertainty
- Political uncertainty
- Technological change

Organizational factors

- Task demands
- Role demands
- Interpersonal demands

Personal factors

- Family problems
- Economic problems
- Personality

### Individual differences

- Perception
- Job experience
- Social support
- Belief in locus of control
- Self-efficacy
- Hostility

### Experienced stress

### Consequences

Physiological symptoms

- Headaches
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease

Psychological symptoms

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Decrease in job satisfaction

Behavioral symptoms

- Productivity
- Absenteeism
- Turnover

# Organizational Stress

- Organizational stress is commonly defined as an emotional, cognitive behavioural and physiological response to the aggressive and harmful aspects of work, work environment and organizational climate.

## **Causes of work-related stress**

- Long hours
- Heavy workload
- Changes within the organisation
- Tight deadlines
- Changes to duties
- Job insecurity
- Lack of autonomy
- Boring work

# Coping Strategies

- **Keep a positive attitude** – sometimes the way you think about things can make all of the difference. Your attitude can help offset difficult situations.
- **Accept that there are events you cannot control** – when you know there are times when you have given all that you can to a situation, it allows you to expend energy where it can be more effective.
- **Learn to relax** – purposeful relaxation, such as deep breathing, muscle relaxation and meditation is essential in training your body to relax. Relaxation should be a part of your daily regimen.

- **Be active regularly** – being active also helps your body more easily fight stress because it is fit.
- **Rest and sleep** - your body needs time to recover from stressful events, so sleep is an important part of caring for yourself.
- **Find your stressors and effective ways to cope with them** - remember that you can learn to control stress because stress comes from how you respond to stressful events.