

## **Stress Management**

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### **Short Communication**

#### **ABSTRACT**

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. In short bursts, stress can be positive, such as when it helps you avoid danger or meet a deadline. A stressor is a chemical or biological agent, environmental condition, external stimulus or an event seen as causing stress to an organism. Psychologically speaking, a stressor can be events or environments that individuals might consider demanding, challenging, and/or threatening individual safety. Stress as a response model, initially introduced by Hans Selye (1956), describes stress as a physiological response pattern and was captured within his general adaptation syndrome (GAS) model (Figure 16.3). This model describes stress as a dependent variable and includes three concepts: Stress is a defensive mechanism. Stress follows the three stages of alarm, resistance, and exhaustion. If the stress is prolonged or severe, it could result in diseases of adaptation or even death. Later, in *The Stress Concept: Past, Present and Future* (1983), Selye introduced the idea that the stress response could result in positive or negative outcomes based on cognitive interpretations of the physical symptoms or physiological experience (Figure 16.3, "The General Adaptation to Stress Model"). In this way, stress could be experienced as eustress (positive) or distress (negative). However, Selye always considered stress to be a physiologically based construct or response. The response model of stress incorporates coping within the model itself. The idea of adaptation or coping is inherent to the GAS model at both the alarm and resistance stages. When confronted with a negative stimulus, the alarm response initiates the sympathetic nervous system to combat or avoid the stressor (i.e., increased heart rate, temperature, adrenaline, and glucose levels). The resistance response then initiates physiological systems with a fight or flight reaction to the stressor, returning the system to homeostasis, reducing harm, or more generally accommodating the stressor, which can lead to adaptive diseases such as sleep deprivation, mental illness, hypertension, or heart disease.

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