



NLJ Fitness & Wellness Consulting

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Stress Strategies

By Nancy Jerominski

Our bodies are wonderfully equipped to handle huge amounts of stress and get us through our lives healthy and intact if we give them the *nutrition* they need. Today, calories and nutrition are *not* synonymous. How nutritious is that donut or Big Mac?

Stress can motivate us to change and many of us do well with certain amounts of it. Done correctly, exercise will stress the body to make it stronger. Too much may make you fit, but can actually cut into your longevity. Exercise highs can become addicting.

Holistic lifestyle coaching considers *all* stressors to one's life before beginning an exercise program (which is a stressor!). Doing killer cardio sessions, cutting calories below 1500 daily with diet "foods" and beverages? These are chronic stressors that signal slowly advancing death to the body. The all-cells alert is "Wow! There isn't enough food in my cave and I'm running to find it....must be a famine. I'll use my muscle as fuel and store the fat until the crisis is past." Think of how old we are as homo-sapiens for the "Ah HAH!" moments.

We evolved to wake with the sun and sleep with the moon. Your body doesn't know the light from the computer isn't the sun and obligingly dumps cortisol (fight or flight), into your system. You're likely eating SAD CRAP snacks for "energy" and to "think better". Insulin floods your blood shunting away excess carbohydrates (aka sugar or glucose) so you don't go into a coma. Insulin's sole function is to make fat and store it on the butt and belly. Whenever insulin goes up, so do estrogen and cortisol and you wake up between 1 and 3AM sweating.

After years of this insult, the pancreas is pooped out and can't produce insulin (Type 2 Diabetes, now epidemic in children). It will have difficulty doing its second job of producing digestive enzymes. When good food *is* eaten, the nutrients can't be absorbed. Weight loss and finding the energy to function, let alone exercising, is difficult.

Top Tips for De-Stressing:

- Eat the very best food you can afford to buy. Packaged "food" isn't food, only empty calories. Start the day with a good breakfast then have your coffee.
- Drink plenty of pure, filtered water (half your body weight in ounces). Drink 20 ounces right when you get up. Every 20 to 30 minutes, drink a cup until 7:30 or 8PM. When you guzzle water, you flash flood the cells, washing away important electrolytes.



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- Dim the lights in your house at night and avoid watching TV programs that rev you up when eating or prior to bed. Avoid caffeine, sugar and alcohol at night and get to bed by 11PM.
- Unless the optimal fuel and water mix fills your tank, moderate exercise, like walking or gentle yoga, is best for healing beat bodies.

