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What is stress?

- A Canadian study found that the majority of people perceive stress to be "time pressure" followed by "work overload". Both of these definitions are in fact consequences of stress. Stress is actually the "fight or flight" response mediated by the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and the adrenal glands.

(Reference: Centre for Studies on Human Stress. www.douglasrecherche.qc.ca Accessed 15/9/2007).

- The language we use to describe biological stress is largely borrowed from engineering, using terms such as stress, strain, tolerance, resistance, breaking points and flexibility.
- One in four Australians have taken time off due to stress at work. OH&S surveys find that the main work stressors are working conditions, job pressure and working relationships.



Is Stress Getting "Out Of Control"?

Stress is blamed for many problems in modern day life: from a wide variety of health issues, to career burn-out and even making people more accident prone. So why is modern life causing our most powerful survival mechanism – the "fight or flight" response – to be continuously triggered?

Modern daily life is a vastly different affair to that of our ancestors, and yet our survival mechanisms are just as finely tuned as they were then, when dangerous predators threatened existence. Today, demanding work and family roles, high speed living, managing finances and relationships may all trigger our stress response.

Add to these life's big or unexpected events, and pressure may quickly escalate to unmanageable levels. It is when there is a *sense of loss of control* that the stress response can become excessive and unbalanced. This is how life's many pressures may collectively become the predators of today, alarmingly driving the stress response to levels that affect health and wellbeing. Often times, these pressures are so distracting that it is not until we get symptoms such as insomnia, palpitations, hypertension, fatigue and/or a change in appetite that we realize stress may be affecting our health and well-being.

A Stress Prescription that Fits: One size fits all OR tailor made?

The stress response itself consists of a predictable chain of biochemical events, and yet the impact that stress has on health and wellbeing is unique to each person. By observing how a person copes with stress we can determine some of the underlying neurological and hormonal imbalances that may be affecting them. For example, do they burst into tears, grit their teeth in irritation or fly into a rage? As everybody responds to stress differently it is important to be able to match your 'stress' prescription to the individual's presentation.

The **Mood and Stress Questionnaire** has been especially developed to ask leading questions that will help to identify which formula will best support your needs in developing a more balanced stress response. Arrange an appointment with Dagmar today and take control. Phone 07 5580 5655 now!