

[IMAGE]

3 Overlooked Causes of Stress and How to Eliminate Them

By Editorial Staff

Stress is a buzzword in health and wellness circles these days, as research and experience provide increasing evidence of the profound life and health consequences. Whether work-, home-, relationship- or just plain life-related, stress can weigh us down and impact every aspect of our existence.

Combating stress before it starts is key to managing it, which means identifying the causes – some of which are commonly overlooked as stress triggers. Are you unknowingly creating stress in your life in any of the following areas? Let's review three overlooked causes of stress and how to eliminate them:

1. Eating Habits: We'll start here because eating is a major part of our daily lives; after all, most of us eat between 3-5 times a day. That's ample opportunity to either reduce or exacerbate stress based upon when, what and how you eat. For example, skip breakfast and you'll likely overeat at lunch and/or dinner, causing digestive dis-stress; eat fatty food and you could feel the same way, along with overall stress caused by feeling bloated. Over time, overeating will cause depression-related stress if you're unhappy with your weight / body shape.

The Solution: Eat sensible, balanced meals throughout the day that include plenty of fiber and are low in fat, helping ensure proper digestion and a comfortable feeling of fullness.

stress - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark *2. Fitness Plan:* Your exercise routine can cause stress just as much as not having an exercise routine at all. Work out too much and you could strain something, putting your fitness goals on the shelf for days, weeks or even longer. Work out too often – or without varying your routine – and you could experience burnout and the stress that comes from not sticking to your exercise program. And skip too many workouts and you'll constantly worry that you're getting out of shape and losing sight of your weight-loss / fitness goals.

The Solution: Schedule regular workout / exercise time and stick to it. Keep your workouts to 45 minutes to an hour, and perform each movement in a controlled fashion with the resistance / weight that's right for you to avoid injury. Finally, vary your workouts every week, few weeks, or even every time to ensure you stay motivated and engaged.

3. *Sleep Patterns*: Whether you're sleeping too much, too little or waking up feeling unrefreshed, poor sleep can contribute to stress because when you're tired, you're more likely to overreact, lose your cool and have difficulty concentrating, multitasking and getting through your busy day.

The Solution: Work on your sleep routine so you get 6-8 hours of restorative, restful sleep every night. To help accomplish this, train yourself to go to sleep and wake up at around the same time; make sure your bedroom is dark and quiet, and you're using the most comfortable pillow and mattress (if you're waking up with neck and/or back pain, you might want to make a change); and avoid sleep inhibitors 2-3 hours before bed, including caffeine, fatty foods, vigorous exercise, and television / computers / cellphones.

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