Stress Reduction

Everyone feels stress sometimes. It is one way that our bodies react to changes in our environment. Stress can be positive when it helps us deal with problems and challenges. The effects of stress become negative when the stress doesn't end. Over a long time, too much stress can raise your risk for chronic diseases.

What Causes Stress?

- Too much to do and not enough time
- Lots of little problems in the same day (like a traffic jam or running late)
- Getting lost
- Having an argument
- Death of a loved one
- Chronic illness
- Problems at work
- Money problems
- Not knowing what the future will bring

What Does Stress Feel Like?

Stress can make people feel:

- Worried
- Angry or irritable
- Sad or depressed
- Unable to focus or concentrate
- Confused

Some physical symptoms of stress:

- Headaches
- Tense muscles
- Shaky hands
- Feeling very tired
- Insomnia
- Heartburn
- Upset stomach

For more information call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555.**
Or visit **www.healthysanfrancisco.org**

How Should I Cope with Stress?

Follow these 7 tips to manage and prevent negative stress in your life:
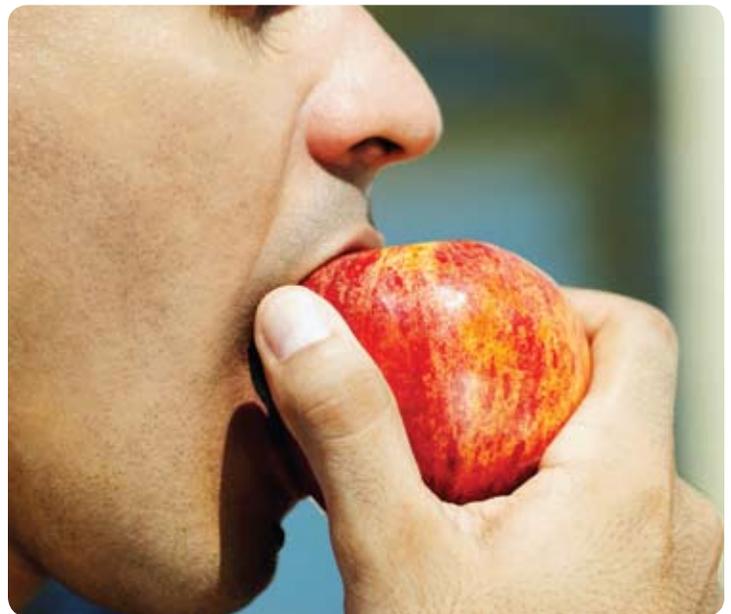
1. **Take 5 slow, deep breaths** to relax when you feel stressed.

2. **Relax your muscles.** Try stretching or taking a hot shower.

3. **Reach out to your friends and family.** It helps to talk, and to have someone listen.

4. **Get professional help if you need it.** If your stress symptoms don't go away or get worse over time, talk to your provider.

5. **Plan your time.** Think ahead about how you are going to use your time. Write a to-do list and decide which tasks are most important.

6. **Eat and sleep well.** Getting enough sleep and eating healthy can be very helpful.

7. **Exercise.** Being active is one of the best ways to prevent and manage stress.

Sources:

"Managing Stress" The Patient Education Institute, National Library of Medicine, **www.nlm.nih.gov**

"Stress at Work" Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **www.cdc.gov**

"Manage Stress" National Health Information Center, **www.healthfinder.gov**