

# Hanover Cardiac Rehabilitation

## Stress and Depression

*Information in these slides is used with permission  
from St. Mary's Cardiac Rehab*

# Stress

How do you describe stress?



# Stress & Emotions

How does this relate to your experience when in hospital?

# Roadblocks – Barriers to Recovery

- Recovery feels slow
- Life is not returning to normal?
- Emotional roller coaster?

*Your feelings may have a name*



# What is Stress?

**“The non specific response of the body to any demand made upon it”**

Dr Hans Seyle- Canadian Scientist -Father of Stress Theory



Stress is a natural response that the body undergoes when faced with any form of physical, emotional, or mental challenge

# A Mind-Body Connection

The body reacts in the same exact way to any of these stressors, causing actual changes in the body

The stress response

- A state of alarm
- ***Ready for action***
- ***Fight or flight***



***The body needs the fight or flight response to survive, the strength and stamina to leap out of the way , fight or flee from danger***

# The Alarm System

- Beyond a certain point the alarm response stops being helpful, causing damage to health, mood, productivity, relationships
- Heart pounding
- Breathing faster
- Jaw tighter, hands clenched, muscles tightened
- Heart rate and blood pressure increased
- The arteries react and constrict
- Platelets become sticky , more likely to make blood clots
- **Heart works harder**

**A Predictor of change to health (heart health)**

# Stress Response

## ***How easily it can creep up on you***

- You get used to it
- It starts to feel familiar - even normal
- You don't notice how it is affecting you even as it takes it h

- Heavy toll

## ***Real or perceived (imagined..)***

The emergency response is on!

***The body prepares to react as if it were facing a saber toothed tiger,  
or a life and death situation***



# Warning Signs of Stress

## 1. Anger

Do you find yourself suddenly getting angry and lashing out, impatient

## 2. Feeling Overwhelmed

Do you feel usual routines are just too much for you ?

## 3. Constant Worry

Do you feel anxious or worried for the majority of the day?

## 4. Exhaustion

Do you get very tired and then find yourself unable to sleep

## 5. Negativity

Seeing the worst in people and situations, magnifying problems, react out of proportion to the reality of the situation

## 6. Neglect

Appearance, housekeeping, paperwork, mail unopened

# Recognize Stress

## Look around

### External Triggers

- ▶ Physical environment
- ▶ Social Interactions
- ▶ Work place
- ▶ Major life events
- ▶ Daily hassles

## Look within

### Internal Triggers

- Lifestyle choices
- Negative self talk
- Mind Traps
- Stress prone personality Traits

# Recognize It

**Track your reactions to stress to help you identify patterns of behaviour**

## **Physical**

- Aches and pains
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Nausea, dizziness
- Chest pain, rapid heart beat
- Loss of sex drive
- Feeling run down
- Digestive Problems
- Sleep Problems
- Auto immune diseases, skin

## **Emotional**

- Moodiness
- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Loneliness and isolation

# Recognize It

## Mental

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgment
- Seeing only the negative (glass half empty)
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Constant worrying

## Behavioral

- Eating more or less
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities
- Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs
- Nervous habits  
(nail biting, foot tapping, pacing)

# Depression can strike anyone

## Key- Recognize it

- Is it Stress?
- Is it Depression?



## Assessment Tool

- What are my stress symptoms
- HAD scale (Blue Sheet)

*Review and discuss your result at Nursing Assessment*

# Symptoms of Depression

- ▶ Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
- ▶ Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- ▶ Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- ▶ Loss of interest in hobbies, activities that were once enjoyed, including sex
- ▶ Decreased energy, fatigue, being “slowed down”
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- ▶ Insomnia, early morning awakening, or oversleeping
- ▶ Appetite and/or weight changes
- ▶ Thoughts of death, suicide or suicide attempt
- ▶ Restlessness, irritability

**If five or more of these symptoms are present every day for at least 2 weeks and interfere with daily activities such as work, self care, child care, or social life TALK TO YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR, HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OR SOMEONE WHO YOU TRUST TO LISTEN, CARDIAC REHAB HEALTH PROFESSIONAL**

# Communication is key



The Doctor may not be able to tell if you are stressed, anxious or depressed just by looking at you

***Your symptoms may be caused by other health problems or medication side effects***

# You deserve to feel better

## *Just A.S.K.*

**A**cknowledge your feelings

**S**hare your feelings with someone

**K**now when and where to seek help





# Managing Stress

There are countless techniques for preventing or managing stress and depression

Seek local community activities program guides

- **Social Activities** – (Bowling, Golf, Cards, Volunteering ...)
- Yoga, Meditation, Tai Chi
- **Counselling**: learn new ways to cope with feelings, new ways of thinking
- Learn relaxation, calming skills



# Managing Stress

## Serenity Prayer

Grant me the **Serenity**  
to **Accept** things I cannot change;  
**Courage** to change the things I can;  
and **Wisdom** to know the difference.

