

Stress Relief

Upcoming Events

December 2025
Millennium Wellness Center
New York City

Men's PSA Blood Screening

Wednesday, December 3 | 9 AM – 1 PM

Led by Rainier Chirinos, NP

Location:

399 Park Ave. Sub Level -2
Millennium Wellness Center

This event fills quickly. If you do not see a time that fits your schedule, please call the Wellness Center at x4200 for assistance.



From the Nurse Practitioner:

Elevated Cortisol, Blood Pressure and the Body's Stress Response

In today's fast-paced environment, stress often feels inevitable. However, when it becomes chronic, the body's natural defense mechanisms begin to work against overall health. Long-term stress triggers hormonal changes that affect nearly every system—from the cardiovascular and endocrine systems to immune regulation and metabolism. Understanding these physiological effects is essential for protecting both health and performance.

Clinical Insight

Activation of the HPA Axis

During stress, the hypothalamus, pituitary gland and adrenal glands (HPA axis) are activated. This cascade releases hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, which temporarily increase heart rate and blood pressure.



Action Steps for Stress Relief

Adjust Your Schedule

Prioritize essential tasks, delegate when possible and say no to non-urgent activities.

Chronic Elevated Stress Levels

Persistent stress keeps cortisol and adrenaline levels high, sustaining elevated blood pressure and increasing cardiovascular strain.¹

Breathe to Relax

Slow, deep breathing for one minute can reduce cortisol levels and calm the nervous system.



Vascular Damage & Inflammation

Prolonged exposure to stress hormones damages blood vessels, promotes atherosclerosis and increases systemic inflammation.²



Exercise Regularly

Physical activity reduces stress hormones and improves circulation. Consult your clinician before beginning a new exercise plan, especially if you have hypertension.

Behavioral Factors

Chronic stress often leads to maladaptive coping behaviors such as poor diet, inactivity, smoking and alcohol use, which independently elevate cardiovascular risk.³

Try Yoga or Meditation

Mind-body practices help regulate heart rate and improve emotional resilience.

Seek Support

Speaking with a mental health professional can help establish effective coping strategies.



Immune Suppression & Slowed Healing

Persistently high cortisol suppresses white-blood-cell activity and slows tissue recovery, making people more susceptible to illness.⁴

Get Adequate Sleep

Sleep restores hormonal balance and enhances recovery.



Takeaway for the Workplace

Chronic stress is not solely psychological—it is a physiological chain reaction that affects the heart, immune system and overall vitality. Understanding this connection allows employees to take preventive action through movement, recovery and clinical support.

Feeling fatigued or stressed? Our Nurse Practitioners can help you manage symptoms and restore balance. [Schedule](#) an on-site visit today.

[Schedule Here](#) >>

References

1. Knezevic E, Nenic K, Milanovic V, Knezevic NN. The role of cortisol in chronic stress, neurodegenerative disease and psychological disorders. *Cells*. 2023;12(23):2726. doi:10.3390/cells12232726. PMID: PMC10706127.
2. American Heart Association News. Chronic stress can cause heart trouble. Published February 4, 2020. Accessed November 2025. <https://www.heart.org/en/news/2020/02/04/chronic-stress-can-cause-heart-trouble>
3. Skjølsvik ET, Hasselberg NE, Dejgaard LA, Lie ØH, Andersen K, Holm T, Edvardsen T, Haugaa KH. Exercise is associated with impaired left ventricular systolic function in patients with lamin A/C genotype. *J Am Heart Assoc*.2020;9(2):e012937. doi:10.1161/JAHA.119.012937. PMID: PMC7033829.
4. Cohen S, Janicki-Deverts D, Miller GE. Psychological stress and disease. *JAMA*. 2007;298(14):1685-1687. doi:10.1001/jama.298.14.1685

Did You Know

Unwind the Body, Calm the Mind

Poor posture and muscle tension do more than cause discomfort—they amplify the response to stress. When muscles tighten, circulation decreases and the nervous system remains in a heightened state of alert, which can contribute to fatigue and irritability.

Small posture corrections and movement breaks throughout the day can significantly reduce physical and emotional stress.



Click the links below to view short, guided videos demonstrating stretches that relieve stress and help you reset between meetings:

[5-Minute Desk Stretches—to relieve neck and shoulder tension](#)

[Standing Lower Back Stretches—for office or home](#)

Look well to the spine for the cause of disease.

~ Hippocrates

To schedule a posture or movement assessment with one of our Chiropractors or Physical Therapists, click the button below.

[Schedule Here](#) >>

A Word from Our Affiliate

Discover How Your Mind Shapes Your Recovery



When an injury happens, the physical damage is only part of the story. Often the greatest barrier to returning to full function is fear—the fear of re-injury.

In this insightful article from Hospital for Special Surgery, learn how the brain's response to trauma can trigger tension and anxiety that hinder movement and healing.

[Click here](#) to explore practical strategies.

Rehab Corner

Standing Bent-Over Shoulder Arm Row

Tight shoulders?
Rounded posture from long hours at your desk?

This simple but powerful movement strengthens your upper back and shoulders while improving posture and easing tension across the neck and spine.

Scan the QR code to learn how to perform the Standing Bent-Over Shoulder Arm Row and add it to your stress-relief exercise routine.

