



Stress And Its Management Through Homeopathy: A Holistic Approach

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a pervasive and debilitating condition affecting millions worldwide; impairing physical and mental health. Stress has become a ubiquitous aspect of modern life, affecting individuals from all walks of life. This review explores the prevalence, causes, and consequences of stress in daily life. Chronic stress triggers hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis activation, releasing cortisol and adrenaline, leading to Anxiety and depression, Sleep disturbances, cardiovascular disease, Weakened immune function, Digestive disorders, Cognitive impairment.

KEYWORDS: Stress, mindfulness, anxiety, depression, Homoeopathy, holistic

INTRODUCTION:

Stress, a pervasive and insidious force, has become an unwelcome companion in modern life. Affecting millions worldwide, geographical, cultural, and socio-economic boundaries, impacting individuals from all walks of life. The World Health Organization recognizes stress as a global health concern, acknowledging its profound effects on physical and mental wellbeing¹.

Defined as the body's adaptive response to perceived threats or pressures, stress triggers a complex interplay of physiological and psychological reactions. Chronic stress, in particular, has emerged as a major public health concern, contributing to the development of anxiety, depression, cardiovascular disease, and other debilitating conditions¹.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Definition: Stress can be defined as our mental, physical, emotional, and behavioural reactions to any perceived demands or threats¹.

Stress – imbalance between the mental and emotional level of an individual/Stress is our mind and body reaction to real or imagined threat, event or change¹

Epidemiology

- 75-90% of primary care visits are stress-related (APA, 2020)
- 80% of workers feel stressed on the job (APA, 2019)
- 45% of adults experience stress daily (Gallup, 2019)¹¹

Global Burden

- Stress affects 1.7 billion people worldwide (WHO, 2019)
- Depression and anxiety disorders (linked to stress) cost \$1 trillion annually (WHO, 2019)¹¹

Demographics

- Women: 62% more likely to experience stress than men (APA, 2020)
- Young adults (18-24): 54% experience stress daily (Gallup, 2019)
- Low-income individuals: 55% more likely to experience stress (APA, 2020)¹¹

Aetiology of stress

- We perceive a situation as dangerous, difficult, or painful
- We don't believe we have the reasons to cope.
- Inability to manage your own system
- Inherent Individual Genes, Upbringing and experiences
- Not knowing how to manage the system is stressful.
- Situations that have strong demands
- Timing – eg :- deviation from the norm
- Life transitions – moving out of a country, divorce, school change.
- Stressful –Job,
- No Employment
- Desirability
- Controlling
- Health issues, either for you or someone close to you
- Money difficulties, like debt or struggling to afford daily essentials
- Personal life
- Feeling of lonely & unsupported¹¹

Signs of stress

1. Have racing thoughts or difficulty concentrating
2. Irritable
3. constantly worried
4. Anxious or scared
5. Trouble sleeping
6. Feel tired all the time
7. Drink Or Smoke More Than Usual
8. Feel a lack of self-confidence
9. Avoid things or people you are having problems
10. Eat more or less than usual¹³

Stressors

A stressor is a chemical or biological agent, environmental condition, external stimulus or an event seen as causing stress to an organism. Psychologically speaking, a stressor can be events or environments that individuals might consider demanding, challenging, and/or threatening individual safety¹⁴.

- Environmental stressors (hypo or hyper-thermic temperatures, elevated sound levels, over-illumination, overcrowding)¹⁴
- Daily stress events (e.g., traffic, lost keys, money, quality and quantity of physical activity)¹⁴
- Life changes (e.g., divorce, breakups, marriage problems)¹⁴
- Workplace stressors (e.g., high job demand vs. Low job control, repeated or sustained exertions, forceful exertions, extreme postures, office clutter)¹⁴
- Chemical stressors (e.g., tobacco, alcohol, drugs)¹⁴
- Social stressors (e.g., societal and family demands& needs)¹⁴

Stressors can cause physical, chemical and mental responses internally. Physical stressors produce mechanical stresses on skin, bones, ligaments, tendons, muscles and nerves that cause tissue deformation and (in extreme cases) tissue failure. Physical stressors may produce pain and impair work performance. Chronic pain and impairment requiring medical attention may result from extreme physical stressors or if there is not sufficient recovery time between successive exposures. Stressors may also affect mental function and performance¹⁴.

Chemical stresses also produce biomechanical responses associated with metabolism and tissue repair¹⁴.

Mental and social stressors may affect behaviour and how individuals respond to physical and chemical stressors¹⁴.

Social and environmental stressors and the events associated with them can range from minor to traumatic. Traumatic events involve very debilitating stressors, and oftentimes these stressors are uncontrollable¹⁴.

Classification of stress

There are 3 types of stress

1. Acute stress
2. Episodic acute stress
3. Chronic stress

Acute stress

It is short-term stress and is also the most common type of stress. The body immediately reacts to a new challenge or an even to giving a speech to a group of people, an argument with someone, being stuck in a traffic jam, Heavy exercise, Fright, Surgery, Emotional stress(happy/sad) can triggers acute stress¹³.

Symptoms of acute stress

- Increased Heart Rate
- Anxiety
- Shortness Of Breath
- Palpitation Of The Heart
- Increased Sweat
- Tension Headache And
- Tensed Muscles In The Neck And Back¹³

Sub Acute stress

Episodic acute stress is the condition where acute stress occurs on a very frequent basis. Anxious personalities and people who tend to think negatively most of the time are at an increased risk to suffer from episodic acute stress¹³

Life transitions – moving out of a country, divorce, school change deviation from the norm¹³

Symptoms of episodic acute stress¹³

- tension headaches,
- migraines,
- depression,
- chronic fatigue,
- Hypertension
- and irritability

CHRONIC STRESS

The stress that is persistent and lasts for a long time is known as chronic stress.

Persons with chronic stress are at a high risk to develop conditions like heart disease, stroke, and cancer or to commit suicide¹³.

TYPES OF CHRONIC STRESS

Eustress or positive stress - when the level of stress is high enough to motivate you to move into an action.

Distress or negative stress – when your level of stress is either too high or too low¹³

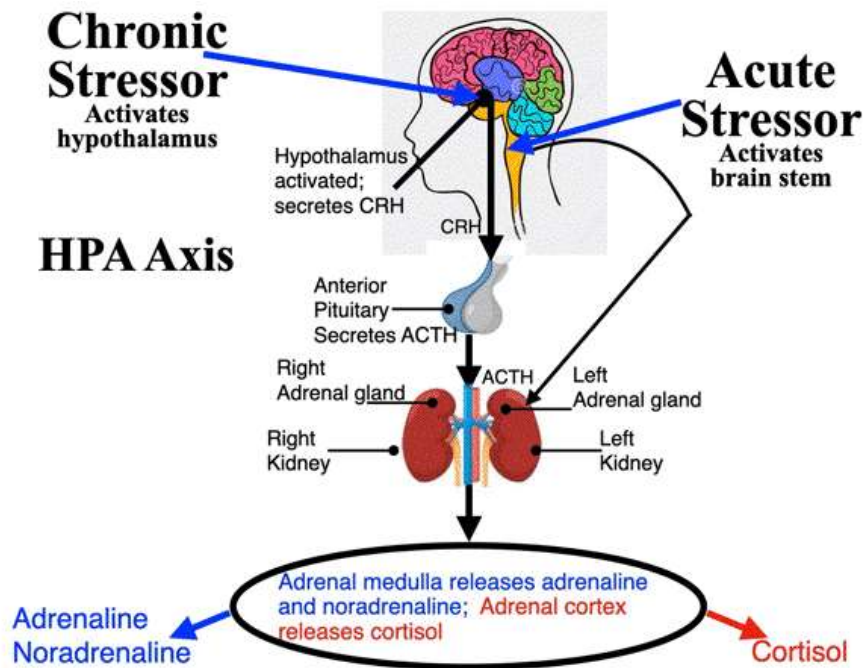
SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Psychological- anxiety & depression

Physical- headache, insomnia, bowel problems, lack of sleep

Severe- hypertension, heart attack, mental breakdown

Skin manifestations- acne, psoriasis, eczema, alopecia¹³

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY OF STRESS⁶Fig.1⁸

- STRESSED BRAIN CAN SOMETIMES LEAD TO HEART BURN, INDIGESTION, NAUSEA, VOMITING AND DIARRHOEA⁷.
- BURNOUT is a state of mind resulting from prolonged exposure to emotional stress. Emotional exhaustion and a combination of negative attitudes⁷.

Fig.2⁸

HOW STRESS AFFECTS OUR BODY



Fig.3⁸

Management

- Find a support system – Find someone to talk to, about your feelings, and experiences. Parent, close friend, husband, relative².....
- Change your attitude²
- Get regular exercise²
- Be realistic²
- Get organized and take charge – Being unorganized or engaging in poor planning, often leads to frustration¹¹
- Plan your time, make a schedule, establish your priorities¹¹
- Take breaks take time for your self²
- Learn that taking time to yourself for rejuvenation and relaxation is just as important as giving time to other activities¹¹
- Learn to say no²
- Slow down – know your limits¹¹

HOMEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT

ACONITUM NAPELLUS – acuteness of anxiety attacks, fear of death, sadness of symptoms, restlessness³

ARGENTUM NITRICUM- Anxiety, Chronic Type, Dizziness, worrying Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Lack Of Self-confidence, Fears Undertaking Anything, Delusion They strength of character Fail, Irrational Impulses And A Forsaken Feeling, Fear Of Height³.

ANACARDIUM ORIENTALE - Anxiety, Fear he is being pursued and prosecuted, possessed of two persons or wills³

ARSENICUM ALBUM - anxiety, anxiousness and mental restlessness, fear of death, fears as if he will die soon, Impulse to commit suicide, fastidious³

ARUM METALICUM - Stress, Pessimistic Thinking About Life (Hopelessness, Worthlessness) Postpartum Depression, Unhappy And Thinks Life Is A Burden, Suicidal Thoughts, A Longing For Death, Anger From Contradictions⁴

CALCAREA CARB – Anxiety, desperate of life. Fears insanity⁴

COFFEA CRUDA - Sleeplessness that develops, due to stress thoughts flow, Nervousness, restlessness, excessive weeping⁴

CARCINOSIN - chronic and serious forms of depression⁴

GELSEMIUM – Fright, Fear, Emotions news Or Forthcoming, Examination And Interview, Stage, Fright, Anticipation Anxiety For Social Outings, Events And Exams³

IGNATIA AMARA – Anxiety- Due To Grief, Acute grief changeable mood. Introspective, Silent, Melancholic, Sad And tearful, Sighing And Sobbing, Managing Stress And Depression, Winter Depression, Desire To Be Left Alone, Laughs And Weeps In Quick Succession³

Kali phos³, lycopodium³, Nat Mur³, Nux Vomica³, Pulsatilla³, Sulphur³, Sepia³, Syphilinum⁴, Thuja⁴

ORGANON APPROACH

Dr. Hahnemann classifies the mental diseases (Aphorism 210 – 230) and gives brief guidelines of their treatment in 6th edition of Organon of medicine⁹.

Hahnemann considers mental diseases as one sided diseases chronic type effecting the whole psycho somatic entity. They are of psoric origin⁵. It is broadly classified into 4 types (aphorism 216,221,224,225) they are⁹

- Somato-psychic disease (aphorism 216)- -Treatment consists of selection of similimum on the basis of corporeal and mental symptoms in a person followed by an antipsoric remedy¹⁰.
- Acute type of mental diseases(aphorism 221)-Acute remedy is selected first on the basis of corporeal and mental symptoms followed by an antipsoric remedy, is the suggested way of the treatment⁹.
- Mental diseases of doubtful origin(aphorism 224)- In these types of diseases, display of confidence, friendly exhortations and sensible advice is to be given to bring down the emotional upset, and if it does not help, a deep antipsoric remedy, has been suggested as the proposed mode of treatment¹⁰.
- Emotional diseases (Psycho-somatic type⁵)(aphorism 225) -Treatment consists of display of confidence, friendly exhortations, sensible advice to bring down the emotional upset, and if it does not help, a deep antipsoric remedy is prescribed¹⁰.

REPERTORIAL APPROACH

- MIND- ANXIETY – acon, ars, aur, bell, bry, caust, carb veg, caust, mez, nit acid
- MIND- ANGER- apis, caust, cham, hell, lach, mez, nat mur, nux vom, puls, sep
- MIND-IMPULSIVE- arg nit, ars, aur, chin
- MIND-DISCOURAGED- acon, ars ach, rhus tox, sulph
- MIND-GRIEF- aur, caust, ign, nat mur, puls
- MIND-INDIGNATION- staph
- MIND-IRRITABILITY- acon, alum, ant c, apis, bell, bry, kali c, lyc, nat m, nux v
- MIND-LOATHING- life- ars, aur, chin, nat m, phos, thuja
- MIND- MOANING – acon, bell, kali c, zinc
- MIND-INDUSTIOUS-aur met, tarent, lach, bell, bry
- MIND-SADNESS- acon, ars, arum met, calc carb, gel, graph, nux v, nat m, puls
- OTHER RUBRICS- MIND-WEeping, SENSITIVE, RAGE, INSANITY, FEAR, FRIGHTENED, DESPAIR, ABUSIVE, ANTICIPATION, LAMENTING¹²

CONCLUSION

Stress is always going to be there, it is how you react to it how you take it in a positive way so that stress can always be looked at as a positive thing. LIFE IS 10% WHAT HAPPENS TO US, AND 90% HOW WE REACT TO IT. Influencing stress hampers day to day lifestyle. Stress place an unavoidable part in each ones life. Homeopathy offers a holistic approach to stress management, providing relief from symptoms promotes overall wellbeing.

The homeopathic remedies in this study such as Aconite, Gelsimium, Arum met, Coffea cruda, Carsinosin, Ignitia amara, etc demonstrate significant potential in stress related symptoms. The individualized approach of the homeopathy ensures particular, characteristic treatment, addressing unique stress profiles and promoting long term recovery.

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