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## NURSES WORK PLACE STRESS AND HEALTHY WAY TO OVER COME THE STRESS

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### ABSTRACT

The present article explore about the stress of nurses facing in the work place especially in the health care setting. Every day nurses face lots of stress and obstacle and over come the stress is the major challenge for them. Due to stress nurses face harmful effect both physically and mentally. It is very essential to minimize the stress and enhance or boost up our internal strength to eliminate it from our carrier. Nurses can adopt various technique to relax herself, whenever she feel stress. In this article we can see about stress and its effects and the way to over come it in detailed manner.

### KEYWORDS

Health care setting, Face lots of stress and Working environment.

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### INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a stressful occupation due to its caring nature. Nurses more often tend to forget to take care of themselves in their desire to help clients, stressing out themselves and giving way to burn out. Nurses should be aware of the stress in the profession and learn how to manage stress for a better future for the profession. Health care agencies should target at minimizing stressors found at the workplaces of nurses. After all nurses who can manage their stress and help others deal with stress are vital to the profession as a whole.

### Definition of stress

“McGarth” (1970)<sup>1</sup> and Walker, Payne, Smith and Jarrett (2004)<sup>2</sup> refers to stress as “an imbalance

between a perceived demand and the perceived ability of the individual to respond to it”.

Coon (2004)<sup>3</sup> simplifies stress to be the “condition that occurs when a challenge or a threat forces a person to adjust or adapt to the environment”.

#### **Definition of work place stress**

Workplace stress is described by Di Martino (2003)<sup>4</sup> as “Physical and emotional response that occurs when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the employee”.

Seaward (2002) describe Workplace stress as the “physical and emotional outcomes that occurs when there is disparity between the demands of the job and the amount of control the individual has in meeting those demands”.

#### **Types of stress**

1. Eustress: The positive force that spice up life by adding excitement and challenge to life, providing a sense of well-being to the individual.
2. Distress: Which is the negative force that threatens effectiveness and is driven by prolonged, unrelieved tension.

#### **Common work place stress for nurses in hospital**

1. Heavy workload: Too many works, limited time, being under - staffed, lack of support from other colleagues, patient and relatives, unplanned sick leaves do contribute to heavy work force nurses experience in their duty.
2. Dealing with death and terminally ill patients.
3. Conflict with physicians: Both nurses and doctors are working for the benefit of the patient, but how they approach to achieve this goal is different and controversial, giving way to conflict of idea. This could be straining to both parties.
4. Problems with peers and colleagues: Nurses work in collaboration with nursing staff within the department and from other departments, physicians and other allied health care workers. Difference in opinions, views and beliefs, personality clashes, use of power and designations create the emotional turmoil that gives rise to stress.
5. Pressure due to conflicting demands of work and home: Nurses are often facing the

dilemma of being a nurse with their role as a friend, a mother, a sister, a daughter, etc. sometimes, nurses find their family life conflicting with that of her job and vice-versa, straining themselves out.

6. Problems with supervisor: Junior nurses, and newly joined nurses work under the supervisors who have high expectations on the new staff.
7. Bullying or sexual harassments.
8. Office politics and competition.
9. Pressure from care giver role: This results from unfulfilled role expectations due to lack of control over the work situation, shortage of resources, concern for the quality of nursing and lack of cooperation among patients, families, and staff members  
Adjusting various work shifts Nursing is an around.

#### **HARMFULL EFFECTS OF STRESS**

##### **Impaired task performance**

Stress interferes with our ability to successfully perform task and responsibilities expected of us. The demands of work may lead to an experienced overload or pressure which often times lead to an impaired or poor performance. Although the person is capable of delivering is performance able to meet other’s expectations.

##### **Disruption of cognitive functioning**

People who are under stress are likely to experience loss of concentration, disorientation, and forgetfulness. A perception of threat or fear of failure makes it difficult for the person to see the situation objectively or to perceive the range of available alternatives. For instance, preoccupation with conflict at home may cause a student to concentrate in his studies, or a worker to be erratic at work.

##### **Unhealthy lifestyle**

People who experience stress are likely to engage in unhealthy activities as a way of coping with stress. smoking, drinking, and overeating (or lack of appetite or skipping meals), and lack of time for exercise are some of the unhealthy behaviours as escape activities of persons who are less tolerant and are inadequate in managing their stress.

### **Psychological problems and disorders**

Stress may lead to some psychological problems and may interfere with effective intrapersonal and interpersonal behavior of an individual.

### **Burnout**

Burnout can be defined as the end result of stress experienced but not properly coped with, resulting in symptoms of exhaustion, irritation, ineffectiveness, and discounting of self and others. Burnout is commonly associated with a negative experience of the individual at work.

### **Post -trauma stress disorders**

Post -traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a condition in which prolonged and extreme stress results to feelings of anxiety and depression. PTSD is characterized by frequent nightmares, outburst of anger, constant unhappiness, and guilt.

### **Physical illness**

The onset or progress of health problems may be affected by stress. Emotional stress may also lead to physiological stress and these results in an eventual breakdown (disease) of a target organ system. Common colds, gastric ulcers, asthma, headaches, skin disorders, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic back pains, and even serious illness such as cancer, stroke, hypertension, stroke and coronary diseases may be produced or aggravated by prolonged exposure to stressful events.

## **STARTGIES TO REDUCE THE STRESS**

### **Strategies help to reduce stress in the work enviorment**

Have humour; share a laugh with colleagues, clients and relatives. This will definitely unwind stress.

1. Organize your work and time by planning.
2. Be assertive and learn to delegate work rather than trying to do it yourself.
3. Keep work life and home life separate from one another as to avoid stress in the individuals as well as others (Potter and Perry, 2005)<sup>5</sup>.
4. Developing systems for effective two- way communication among the employees, Promoting prompt and constructive resolution of conflicts with in work area.

5. Manage your time better - mismanaged time factor is a major stressor. Avoid it by proper management of your time, prioritizing your tasks, breaking big projects in to feasible small amounts, and delegating works to capable others.
6. Learn to co-operate with other colleagues and establish a worker friendly environment
7. Share your feelings - have a sincere talk with a trusted colleague, it will help a great deal to reduce stress.

### **Strategies help to reduce stress of nurse on its own**

1. Learn how to say "no".
2. Avoid people who stress you out.
3. Avoid argumentative conversations in work area, especially politics.
4. Express your feelings instead of bottling them up.
5. Be willing to compromise.
6. Be more assertive - have the courage to deal with the problems as they come. Be firm to show away a distraction if you have a lot of work to do.
7. Accept the things you cannot change - learn to accept the fact that some stressors are unavoidable. Accept these stressors rather than trying to change it.
8. Look for the upside - be optimistic, take challenges as opportunities for growth of self and try to learn from mistakes, rather than whining about it.
9. Learn to forgive - forgiving is better than holding the grudge against your colleagues and co - workers.

### **Stratergies of health care organization to reduce the nurses stress in their place**

1. Health care organizations can give compensation remedies for shift work. For example, giving night duty allowances will motivate nurses to do night duty rather than taking it as a burden.
2. Health care organizations should establish a safe working environment for their employees.

3. Health care organizations can promote motivation in their employees through positive reinforcements.
4. Recruit enough staff that is competent, both practically and theoretically to avoid work overload and minimize sick leaves.
5. Nursing curriculums can emphasize on the psychological aspect of the disease conditions, which will decrease surprise and anxiety when they become graduate nurse.
6. Nurses should be encouraged to adopt healthy life styles for themselves and put aside time for themselves every day for relaxation and leisure in order to recharge themselves.
7. Health care agencies can develop in - service health promotion classes for the nurses. For example, healthy weight plans and routine exercise classes.
8. Continuing education and staff development programs will enhance quality of care as well as reduce anxiety and stress related to work by giving the worker the knowledge that is required efficiently with advancements in health care.
9. Psychological counselling and therapy should be easily accessible and available for troubled staff members.
5. Dietary factor: Stress can lead to eating unhealthy foods. Research shows that a healthy diet can reduce secretion of stress hormone cortisol. So avoid junk food, caffeine.
6. Music: Studies prove music is the most effective stress buster. Just like the human body requires water when we are thirsty, music acts as a medicine during distress.
7. Talk it out: Talk things over with someone else. The listener can serve as a sounding board. Express your anger. Much stress is associated with unexpressed anger, unexpressed hostility.
8. Adopt defence mechanisms: it help to reduce or escape from the stress
9. Other relaxation technique includes assertive training, book reading, breathing exercise avoidance of drinking alcohol and smoking, eating balanced diet etc.

#### **Benefits of stress**

In understanding the effect of stress, it is important to note that individuals also may benefit from stressful experiences. These benefits, however, are subtle and are not readily seen or felt.

1. Stressful events help satisfy the need for stimulation and challenge. There are people who enjoy higher stimulation and challenges in life. At work, for instance, some people become less productive when they are not intellectually challenged.
2. Stress can also promote personal growth or self- improvement. Stressful events sometimes force people to develop new skills, learn new insights, and acquire new strengths. In the process of adaptation, people may discover new potentials that contribute to a better well- being. The ability to succeed in confronting and overcoming a stressful challenge may lead to improvements in specific coping abilities and an enhanced self- concept.
3. Stressful events experienced by individuals can inoculate them so that they are less affected by future stressors. Studies reveal

#### **Various technique to reduce the stress**

1. Relaxation technique: it help to reduce muscle tension, heart rate and blood pressure. it include progressive muscle technique and mediation.
2. Exercise: Any sort of physical activity like aerobics, walking or dancing can help to reduce negative effect of stress on brain.
3. Biofeedback: It is a technique to control internal physiological process such as BP heart rate and respiration rate.
4. Inoculation: Preparing for stress before it happens, inoculation prepare people for stressful experience of either a physical or emotional nature by explaining in as much possible the difficult evented they are likely to encounter.

that exposure to stress can increase stress tolerance.

4. Development or improvement of the individual's optimism, conscientiousness, self-control, and resistance.

## CONCLUSION

Nursing by its very nature is a profession that yields high levels of emotion that could sometimes be overwhelming and stressful to the individuals. Everyday nurses put up with the pressure of the profession with the aim of making a difference. They offer their endless care and hospitality to their clients and their families, concentrating all their energy on their duty to serve to the needful and promote wellness among their clients. In the process of caring, they tend to forget basic health. Positive strategies for alleviating or for coping with stress in the workplace is essential to reduce stress and enhance coping and maintain healthy life and working environment.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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