

Stress Eating

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Faculty

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Objective

- Identify three stressors associated with home care delivery
- Identify four effects that unresolved stress has on the body and mind
- List two reasons why people eat when stressed
- Identify four stress management techniques that can be used at work or at home

Comfort Foods

Description:

“Food prepared in a traditional style having a usually nostalgic or sentimental appeal” (Webster’s)

- Typically inexpensive, uncomplicated, easy to prepare, and triggers memories
- Food that sticks to the ribs

Comfort Food Composition

- Carbohydrates- Simple and Complex
 - Sugar (cakes, pies, cookies, donuts, chocolate)
 - Refined wheat (macaroni and cheese)
- Fats
 - Creams and butter (fried foods)
 - Hidden fat in food (ice cream)

Why Select “Comfort Foods”

- Learned behavior
- Body chemicals

Food Related Learned Behaviors for Dealing with Stress

- **Familiarity**
 - Emotional security, comfortable memories in uncertain time
- **Reward**
 - Got through the problem day and deserve a special treat

Food Related Learned Behaviors for Dealing with Stress

- **Social support**
 - Going out with the girls for food and drinks
- **Stuff emotions**
 - Uncomfortable with confrontations deal with frustrations with food (cake, chocolate, etc.)

Body Chemicals

- **Endorphins**
 - Endogenous peptides found in the brain that bind chiefly to opiate receptors and produce good feelings

Body Chemicals

- **Serotonin**
 - Neurotransmitter chemical derived from the amino acid tryptophan and constricts blood vessels at injury sites
 - Affects emotional states
 - Called “the feel good hormone”

Body Chemicals

- **Ghrelin**
 - Hormone made to balance anxiety and depression
 - Causes increase in appetite

Body Chemicals

- **Dopamine**
 - Neurotransmitter essential to the functioning of the central nervous system, playing a key role in brain function and human behavior
 - Brain chemical sensing pleasure

Body Chemicals

- **Glucocorticoids**
 - **Cortisol**
 - **A steroid hormone associated with inflammation involved in carbohydrate metabolism and the stress reaction**

New Area of Concern

- **Children of stressed moms often respond by developing poor eating habits**
- **Learned stress therapy**

Putting It All Together

- **Food used for stress management is both learned and a body reaction**
- **Need to learn other management techniques**