

Often times when we speak of health we think about our physical condition. However, there are many dimensions to health: physical, social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, & mental. All of these dimensions are equally important. Interestingly, one dimension can affect the others. Lets use the mental health issue of stress to explore how it affects other dimensions of health. When under high levels of stress we and others around us can feel the effects physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We may feel aches and pains in our body, or angry or depressed and possibly take it out on others, and lose our peace of mind. This a good example of why it is critical to try to maintain a balance between all six dimensions of health to experience an optimal level of wellness.



October 2008

The month of October is dedicated to creating awareness about mental health issues. Around the universe people will celebrate World Mental Health Day on October 10th. Think of some ways that you can take part in the celebration. Maybe you could volunteer with an organization that addresses mental health issues. Or, take the day off and do something fun and relaxing to preserve your mental health! Most importantly, take the time to educate yourself and others about any mental health topic. Education is key in being able to prevent the onset of disorders, seeking treatment, and helping others. Visit these websites to learn more:

•www.nimh.nih.gov

•www.samhsa.gov

•www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, around 26.2% of American adults are living with a diagnosable mental disorder each year. Mood & anxiety disorders are the most common mental health issues . About 20.9 million adults have some form of a mood disorder (major depressive, dysthymic, and bipolar disorders along with suicide). Anxiety disorders affect nearly 40 million adults. Panic attacks, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, post-traumatic stress, generalized anxiety, and a variety of phobias are categorized as anxiety disorders. Millions of others suffer from a variety of other mental health disorders such as: schizophrenia, eating disorders, autism, Alzheimer's, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and more. More than half of those with disorders have more than one mental health disorder at a given time.

Sometimes we can be overwhelmed with all the things that life throws our way! Enroll in our Relax wellness program to learn how you can find healthy ways to cope with stress. For help with more serious issues, certified counselors are available through the Employee Assistance Program to assist in a variety of areas (life, family, legal, work, money, and more). Please contact Corphealth at 1.866.378.1645 to learn more about our wellness & mental health services. If you are eligible, services are free and confidential for you and your family members. Listed below are general suggestions and descriptions of alternative therapies to improve your mental health status. Here's a challenge, pick three techniques to try for the next month to figure out what works best for you. You'll be surprised how small changes can make a big difference!



Improving Your Mental Health

BEHAVIOR CHANGES

- Put things in perspective-and remember what is most important to you
- Self reflect on what you're doing and if you need to do it differently
- Make time for yourself
- Create a positive environment
- Exercise regularly
- Find a hobby
- Be more social
- Find creative ways to reduce your stress
- Take it easy-prioritize your to do list-pick 3 task to complete daily
- Eat a healthy balanced diet
- Attend to your spiritual needs
- Establish or join a support network

ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

- Visualization uses relaxation techniques and mental imagery to achieve a state of deep relaxation.
- Tai-Chi combines martial arts & meditation to relieve the effects of stress.
- Yoga is a combination of breathing exercises, stretches, postures, and meditation.
- Acupuncture involves stimulation of pressure points with small needles to regulate body functions to restore balance.
- Massage Therapy involves stimulation of the muscles to relieve tension.
- Expressive Therapies (art, dance, music) are used to treat a variety of disorders by encouraging expression of emotions through different art forms.