

**ANNUAL HEALTH & FITNESS ISSUE**

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## STRESS

Coping with  
the grind  
in today's  
fast-paced  
world

**INSIDE:**  
**COMPUTERS AND  
THE YEAR 2000  
PROBLEM**

**INDEPENDENT  
FILMS GO  
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**CIRQUE DU SOLEIL  
RETURNS TO O.C.**



## STRESS

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car overheats on the way to pick up the kids after work, you forgot to pay the cable bill so there's nothing to do but go to sleep, which you can't do because you keep thinking about things you forgot to do today.

A stress-filled day? Yes, but it's mostly a short-term, not long-term, problem. And it's the long-term stress, says Dr. Treanor, that causes the body to call out for help.

pituitary gland notes an emergency, the gland waits to give the body the growth hormone, so the body under stress that could use the growth hormone doesn't get it. There is an enormous price paid for this."

No group of people see the results more often than fitness trainers. And the remedy:

"Many people use the gym workout after a long day," says John Platero, fitness coordinator in charge of personal trainers at 26 locations in Orange County, Los Angeles and the Inland Empire. "Many people are

"WHEN I'M STRESSED, I GET BACK SPASMS. I USED TO TAKE MUSCLE RELAXERS, BUT NOT ANYMORE. I WORK OUT AT LUNCH TIME, I GO BACK TO WORK AND FEEL MUCH LESS STRESS. IT'S CHEAPER THAN DOCTORS."

— BUSINESSMAN

AL PALAZZO

"According to your DNA, you have a plan A, your optimum efficiency pathway, or freeway," he explains. "Stress congests that main pathway and makes it difficult to use. It's like having traffic on the freeway and you have to get off and use surface streets. It's not as efficient. If the stress persists, the body is forced to shift off Plan A, the best plan, and use plan B, which is an emergency pathway. The body is calling 911 all the time. After it does this for a period of time, it doesn't stop doing it when the stress disappears.

For example, an individual goes to work, comes home, goes to sleep, and when he sleeps there's a good chance of having his pituitary gland continue to drive his adrenals to produce emergency hormones. Normally, if the pituitary gland is convinced the body is in relative balance, it will divvy out a nice large dose of growth hormones, which un-ages you and signals the growth of new tissues and recovery. When the

not the boss where they work, and they get frustrated because they are not making the decisions and they often get caught in the middle."

As a result, many clients turn to kick boxing and other challenging fitness offerings.

### I'm fine

Many people suffering from stress don't even know it. Often, symptoms such as headaches, insomnia, fatigue, back pain, nausea, sweaty palms, ringing in the ears, forgetfulness, anxiety, loneliness, compulsive eating, drinking and smoking are warning signals.

In recent studies, primary-care physicians report that between 40 and 90 percent of those seen in their offices have symptoms that can be attributed to stress and lifestyle. Leon Chaitow, author of "The Stress Protection Plan," writes that "stress-induced illnesses now cause more deaths and diseases than do infections."

"Stress can frequently go unnoticed although most folks recognize they have stress but they don't realize to what degree it's affecting them," says UCI's Dr. Hassor. "It can raise blood pressure, lessen control of diabetes, it can lead to strokes and heart attacks."

Once a patient is diagnosed as stressed says Dr. Treanor, there are a number of ways to respond. Patient history may reveal pattern that cause stress, often involving competitiveness in the workplace and a their choice of sports.

"They may have a lot in their lives that is turning them on and nothing is slowing them down," he says. "They are going at extreme top speed, and they interpret that as normal. They learn to live in an emergency state. They may come in with chronic inflammation that won't go away, they take drugs and comes back, they have physical therapy and it comes back. They have so much gasoline around them that every time they light match, they get a big flame. They have a get that gasoline out of their lives."

So what are people doing to combat stress? They're working out, eating well, meditating and getting massages.

### Stress management

Al Palazzo, 51, is the owner of Saddleback Interiors in Irvine. Married with two children, he finds that balancing a demanding work schedule with home life can put a big strain on his health. He began working out at TI Sports Club/Irvine after his doctor told him he was suffering from stress. His stress has decreased noticeably since starting a regular exercise program.

"If I don't go regularly, the stress conditions take over," says Palazzo. "When I'm stressed, I get back spasms. I used to take muscle relaxers, but not anymore. I work out at lunch time, I go back to work and feel much less stress. It's cheaper than doctors."

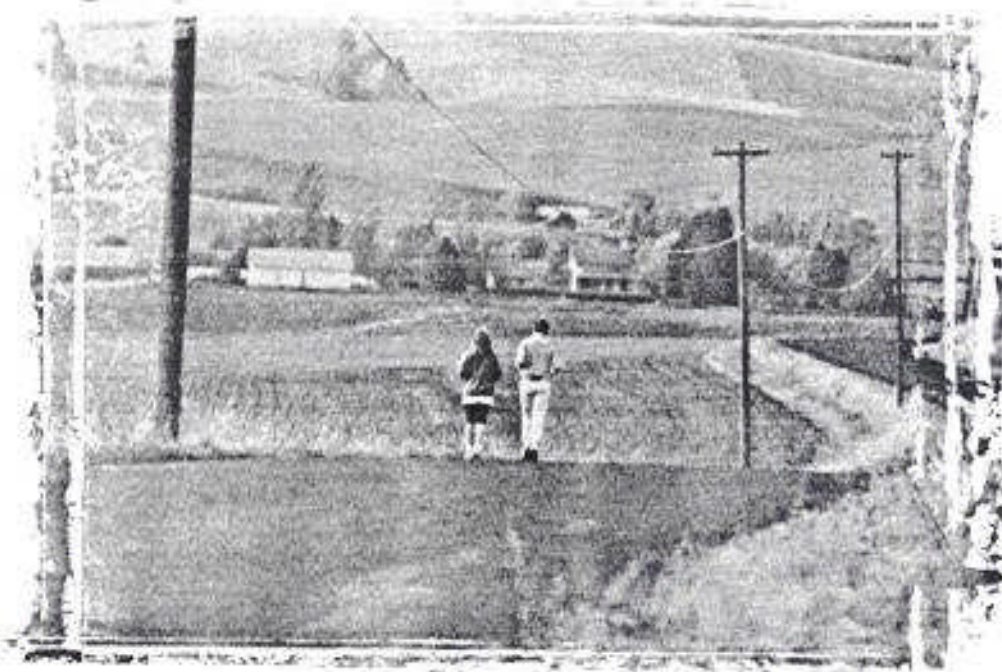
Palazzo also has incorporated proper nutrition into his diet to assist in his stress reduction program. And learning not to be stressed out about every little thing that happens, particularly when dealing with business matters, has made a big difference in Palazzo's life.

"You don't change anything by getting stressed out," he says. "You have to develop an attitude about it, you have to be positive. The more you stress out, the worse it gets. Handle it calmly. If there is a solution, you can find it when you are calm."

"We live in a very stressful world," says Shelley Westmore of Orange. "We have machines, cellular phones, pagers, every way for people to get ahold of us. It's so much stimulation. I don't think our bodies were designed to withstand the stress of that kind of onslaught."

As the executive director of the Cos Mesa-based Girls Inc., Westmore knows about stress.

"There are many hats to wear at one and I'm always dealing with a crisis or an emergency," she says. "During one particularly stressful time, a friend told me about massaging



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