

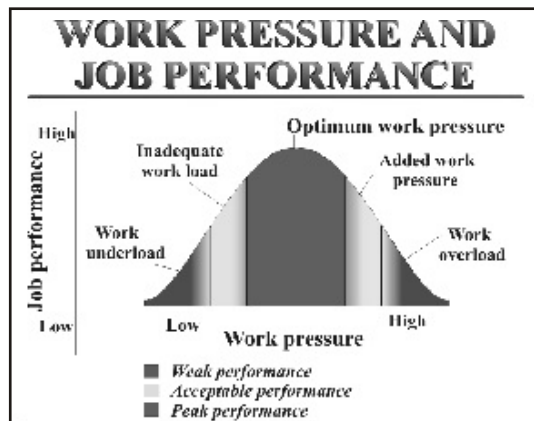


In this issue of **healthbites** we take an interesting look at stress. The article is so interesting we have allowed it to take up nearly the whole front page. Over the page you will find some interesting information about table spreads and of course some little bites for you to chew over.

Benefits of Stress

"Burned out." "Overloaded." "Exhausted." "Overwhelmed." Many of the words we use to describe life's tensions reflect the impact of stress on our lives...

Some stress responses may be beneficial. Although most think of stress as something negative, Dr. Selye recognized both a good and a bad type of stress. Selye defined "distress" as the stress that was damaging or unpleasant,¹ while the stress that resulted in pleasurable or satisfying experiences he called "eustress."² Dr. Phillip Rice has pointed out that eustress can improve our sense of awareness, promote alertness, and can ultimately result in superior performance. His examples are the stresses of sports competition, a theatrical performance, or a wedding ceremony.³ This relationship was first published in 1908 by R. M. Yerkes and J. D. Dodson.⁴ The Yerkes-Dodson law or curve described a relationship between stress and performance. An adaptation of their curve is illustrated...



The Yerkes-Dodson graph compares work pressure and job performance. In place of "work pressure" we could just as easily substitute the term "stressor." Regardless of what terms you use, work pressure can affect job performance in a negative or positive way. On the far-left side of the graph where work pressure is low, job performance is also low. The individual is not sufficiently challenged to be very productive. Moving toward the right, as the work pressure and challenge increase, job performance increases—finally to its maximum amount. This is labeled "optimum work pressure." Once a person reaches this optimal level of performance, adding more pressure will cause job performance to deteriorate. Ultimately, the very high pressure/high stress environment results in extremely poor performance. If maximal output is the goal, neither over-pressure nor under-pressure is optimal.

These observations illustrate that, contrary to popular opinion, stress and stressors are essential ingredients in our lives. In fact, they are necessary components of an efficient, useful, productive, and satisfying life. These insights provide an explanation for individuals who seem to thrive in the face of many external pressures. Not only are they productive and positive; they are also free of disease and have healthy interpersonal relationships.

In reality, each of us has our own Yerkes-Dodson curve. Some need a large amount of work pressure, challenge, or stress to achieve their optimal level of performance. This same level of stress would overwhelm others. Nonetheless, the principle is the same for all. We each do our best with a certain level of stress. Too little or too much stress is counterproductive. A certain level of stress is also necessary in our social relationships and other aspects of our lives. We would not want to evade the pressures and stresses of life. They provide motivation and help us to accomplish more than we would otherwise. We all need to have a compelling reason to get up in the morning. If our coping mechanisms are intact, we will often be able to tolerate and even thrive on more pressure and become more efficient and productive...

As Rice put it, "The aim of stress management is not to eliminate stress entirely, but to control it so that an optimal level of arousal is present."³

Article taken from *Proof Positive*, Dr Neil Nedley.

1. *Stress Without Distress*, H. Selye, p. 31.

2. *The stress concept and some of its implications*, H. Selye

3. *Stress And Health: Principles And Practice For Coping And Wellness*, PL. Rice, p. 18-19.

4. *The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit formation*. RM Yerkes, JD Dodson.

Quote of the Month

*You should
labor with care
and observe
periods of rest.
By so doing
you will retain
your physical
and mental
vigor and
render your
labor much
more efficient.*

—E G White

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Autumn Leaves NZ Ltd

PO Box 654
Rangiora 7440
New Zealand



health@autumnleaves.co.nz

little bites

Grape juice improves memory

NaturalNews.com, 9 July 07

Scientists have found that a delicious natural drink can actually improve memory in older adults who have already experienced early memory decline. The brain power booster isn't anything exotic or rare, either — it is Concord grape juice.

Honey better than cough medicine for kid's coughs

NaturalNews.com, 21 July 08

Honey is a more effective cough remedy for children than many over-the-counter medications, according to a new study conducted by researchers at the Penn State College of Medicine.

More family meals mean less teen sex

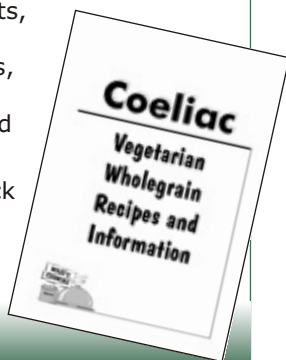
The Independent, 9 June 2008

Parents who don't want their teens to engage in risky sexual behaviour should make family time a priority, a new study suggests. The more times a week that an adolescent reported having dinner with their family, "doing something religious" as a family, or having fun with their family, the less likely he or she was to engage in risky sexual behaviour, Dr. Rebekah Levine Coley of Boston College and her colleagues found.

Coeliac Vegetarian Wholegrain Recipes and Information

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A Spreading Issue

Jane, a **healthbites** reader, recently sent us some interesting reading. "I thought this might be of interest to you - as there is so much controversy over the use of butter vs margarine. I personally won't have the latter in the house!"



The article, by a Stephen Byrnes explains that margarine and assorted "vegetable oil spreads" go through a process that notably affects their healthful qualities.

"Margarines are made from assorted vegetable oils that have been heated to extremely high temperatures. This insures that the oils will become rancid. After that, a nickel catalyst is added, along with hydrogen atoms, to solidify it... Finally, deodorants and colorings are added to remove margarine's horrible smell (from the rancid oils) and unappetizing grey color. And if that is not enough, in the solidification process, harmful trans-fatty acids are created which are carcinogenic and mutagenic."¹

So while many turn to vegetable based margarines as an alternative to animal based products; due to the amount it is processed and the processes used, they are not necessarily gaining a more healthful product.

The principle of eating a diet of natural foods as close to how it is provided in nature as possible is still the best.

1. *Butter is Better*, Stephen Byrnes, ND, RNCP.

Allergy myth debunked

A young Melbourne scientist has released research that blows out of the water the theory soy milk causes peanut allergies in children.

But the latest research brings those claims into question.

"The good news for parents is that they can now feed their children on soy milk and not have to worry about getting peanut allergies," Ms Koplin said, a PhD student at the University of Melbourne who conducted the research.

Peanut allergy is the leading cause of fatal anaphylactic reactions to food, affecting about one in 100 children with the rate more than doubling in the past 30 years.¹

1. <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2008/06/18/1213770721239.html>.

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Recipe of the Month

Gluten-free Tofu Sausage Rolls

2 c gluten-free bread crumbs
100 g tofu
1½ t mixed herbs

1 onion
1 t salt
½ c tomato sauce or puree

Finely chop onion and cook. Mix in food processor. Make into sausage rolls with gluten-free pastry. Bake at 200°C for 20 mins or until bottoms are golden brown.

—Taken from *Coeliac Vegetarian Wholegrain Recipes and Information*

