

# **12 - Stress Prevention: Safety Training**

EH&S – MGA

**Goals: This safety session should teach you to:**

- A. Understand the causes and dangers of work stress.
- B. Use stress-reducing approaches and techniques.

**OSHA Regulations: General Duty Clause Sec. 5 (b)**

**1. Stress Is a Physical and Emotional Reaction to Pressure, Change, Fear, or the Unknown**

- A. Physical reactions include:
  - 1. Release of adrenaline
  - 2. Muscle tension
  - 3. Increased heart rate and blood pressure
  - 4. Perspiration

**2. Stress Can Be Positive**

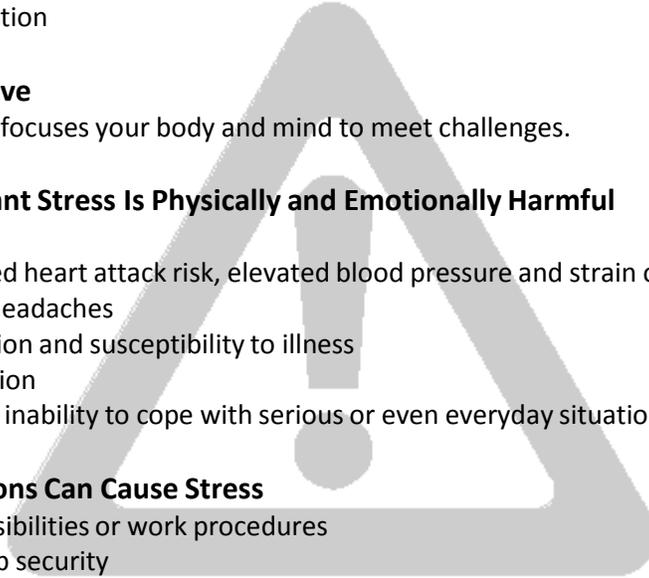
- A. It energizes and focuses your body and mind to meet challenges.

**3. Repeated or Constant Stress Is Physically and Emotionally Harmful**

- A. It can cause:
  - 1. Increased heart attack risk, elevated blood pressure and strain on the heart
  - 2. Strong headaches
  - 3. Exhaustion and susceptibility to illness
  - 4. Depression
  - 5. Panic or inability to cope with serious or even everyday situations

**4. Many Work Situations Can Cause Stress**

- A. New job responsibilities or work procedures
- B. Concern over job security
- C. Work overload and tight deadlines
- D. Difficult personal relationships
- E. Feeling you lack control over your job, future, etc.
- F. Work stress can have a stronger impact if combined with other sources of stress such as family, financial, health, or personal problems.



## **5. Learn to Reduce Negative Stress**

- A. Even when you can't change a situation, you can change your reaction to it.
- B. Treat problems as situations to be corrected, not threats to your future.
- C. Put things in perspective; every problem isn't a crisis.
- D. Don't take everything personally; changes, criticisms, or difficulties reflect what's happening on the job, not a negative response to you as an individual.
- E. Don't try to control everything and everyone; it's impossible and adds to stress.
- F. Accept that no one is perfect – not you, your boss, your co-workers. Everyone makes mistakes of action or judgment. Be forgiving to others and yourself.
- G. Set priorities and tackle tasks in order to achieve a sense of accomplishment.

## **6. Try to Reduce Negative Reactions to Stress**

- A. You add to stress and accomplish nothing positive if you react to stress by:
  - 1. Getting angry at yourself or others
  - 2. Trying to place the blame on yourself or others
  - 3. Expecting the worst and worrying about the unknown
  - 4. Suffering in silence and refusing to admit your anger or concerns
  - 5. Withdrawing from potentially stressful situations or people
  - 6. Using alcohol or drugs to reduce stress

## **7. Try to Head Off and Work Off Stress**

- A. Minimize small annoyances
- B. Develop a cooperative work style; give and get help.
- C. Exercise. It clears the head, relaxes the muscles, and helps the body fight negative stress.
- D. Get enough rest. Your body needs a chance to recover from stress.
- E. Laugh at situations, yourself, or a joke. It eases stress.
- F. Get professional help if you feel overburdened by constant stress. You may learn techniques to help you deal with stress or avoid some of its causes.

## **Summation: Reduce Negative Stress and Its Physical and Emotional Problems**

You can't eliminate stress from life. You can identify and try to minimize situations you find stressful and head off negative reactions to them.