 **STRESS: THE FACTS** 

**WHAT IT IS**

* An emotional/bodily reaction to physical, psychological or emotional demands
* A fact of life
* It can be useful and healthy (viewing events as challenges).
* ***Unmanaged*** stress can become distressful and unhealthy (viewing events as threats).

**CAUSES**

* Expectations we place on ourselves
* Expectations of others
* Physical environment—noise, movement, weather, season changes
* Internal environment—academic pressure, frustration, not enough time, decisions,

social life

**SYMPTOMS**

* Increased heart rate and blood pressure; feeling tense, irritable, fatigued or depressed
* Lack of interest and ability to concentrate; apathy
* Avoidance behaviors: abuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco

**HOW TO HANDLE IT**

* Add balance to life; don’t overdo studies or play.
* Know and accept what kind of person you are: strengths and weaknesses.
* Get a thorough physical exam.
* Take “time-outs,” especially during study.
* Expand your support network, reinforce friendships.
* Exercise regularly.
* Watch your breathing.
* Walk loosely and walk more.
* Learn and practice relaxation skills
* Study each subject regularly for moderate periods of time.
* Discuss problems with friends, family, dean or counselor.