

HOW VULNERABLE ARE YOU TO STRESS?

In a modern society, most of us can't avoid stress. But we can learn to behave in ways that lessen its effects. Researchers have identified a number of factors that affects one's vulnerability to stress-- among them eating and sleeping habits, caffeine and alcohol intake, and manner of expressing emotions. The following questionnaire, developed by psychologists Lyle H. Miller and Alma Dell Smith of Boston Medical Center, is designed to help you discover your vulnerability quotient and to pinpoint trouble spots. Rate each item for 1 (almost always) to 5 (never), according to how much time the statement is true of you. Be sure to mark each item, even if it seems not to apply to you--for example, if you don't smoke, check off "1" next to item 6.

ALMOST
ALWAYS

NEVER

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1. I eat at least one hot, balanced meal a day. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. I get seven to eight hours of sleep at least 4 nights a week. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. I give and receive affection regularly. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. I have at least one relative within 50 miles on whom I can rely. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. I exercise to the point of perspiration at least twice a week. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6. I limit myself to less than half a pack of cigarettes a day. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7. I take fewer than five alcoholic drinks a week. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8. I am the appropriate weight for my height. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9. I have income adequate to meet basic expenses. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 10. I get strength from my religious beliefs. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 11. I regularly attend club or social activities. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 12. I have a network of friends and acquaintances. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 13. I have one or more friends to confide in about personal matters. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 14. I am in good health (including eyesight, hearing, and teeth). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 15. I am unable to speak openly about my feelings when angry or worried. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 16. I have regular conversations with the people I live with about domestic problems --for example, chores and money. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 17. I do something for fun at least once a week. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 18. I am able to organize my time effectively. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 19. I drink fewer than three cups of coffee (or other caffeine-rich drinks) a day. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 20. I take some quiet time for myself during the day. |

* * To get score, add up the figures and subtract 20. A score below 10 indicates excellent resistance to stress. A score over 30 indicates some vulnerability to stress. *You are seriously vulnerable if your score is over 50!*