

# HOPE

HEALTHLETTER

## TAKE THIS STRESS TEST

- ☐ If you feel you have a supportive family, give yourself 10 points.
- ☐ If you have a hobby you enjoy, give yourself 10 points.
- ☐ If you belong to a social activity group (other than your family) that meets at least once a month, give yourself 10 points.
- ☐ If you are within five pounds of your ideal weight, give yourself 15 points.
- ☐ If you practice some form of "deep relaxation" at least three times a week (e.g., meditation, yoga, imagery, etc.), give yourself 15 points.
- ☐ For each day during the course of an average week that you get at least 30 minutes of brisk exercise, give yourself 5 points.
- ☐ For each nutritionally balanced, wholesome meal that you eat during an average day, give yourself 5 points (maximum: 15 points).
- ☐ If, during the course of an average week, you plan and do something you really enjoy (that's just for you), give yourself 5 points.
- ☐ If there's somewhere in your home you can go to for relaxation and to be by yourself, give yourself 10 points.
- ☐ If you practice "time-management" skills in your daily life, give yourself 10 points.
- ☐ Subtract 5 points for each pack of cigarettes you smoke in an average day.
- ☐ Subtract 10 points for each time during the day of an average week that you use alcohol or other drugs to help you relax.
- ☐ Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that you use alcohol or other drugs to help you relax.
- ☐ Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that you bring office work home. □

### WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

A "perfect" score is about 120 points. Short of that, the higher your score, the greater the likelihood that you cope well with the ups and downs of life. (An "average" score is about 50 or 60.)

Source: Adapted from a test developed for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by Maryland psychologist George S. Everly, Jr.

### SYMPTOMS THAT COULD INDICATE TOO MUCH STRESS

Dry mouth  
Headache  
Sighing  
Overeating / Undereating  
Chain smoking  
Stomach cramps  
Diarrhea / Constipation  
Nausea  
Feeling "faint"  
Stroking beard / mustache  
Hair twirling/ pulling / tossing  
Clenched fists  
Nervous cough  
Mouth noises (e.g., tongue clucking)  
Talking too much / too fast  
Inability to talk  
"Lump" in throat  
Lack of sexual interest  
Sweating  
Menstrual irregularities  
Blushing  
Fingernail biting  
Leg wagging  
Rocking back and forth  
Depression  
Anger / Irritability / Resentment  
Tic in eye or elsewhere  
Desire to "run away"  
Muscle spasms / tightness  
Fatigue / Weariness  
Continual boredom  
Hypochondria  
Clammy hands  
Lip biting  
Ready tears  
Hyperactivity / Listlessness  
Inability to be alone  
Sleeping too much / not enough  
Heart palpitations