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The Stress Epidemic

New statistics from the American Psychological Association national survey released in October 2007 shows that one-third of Americans are under extreme stress, while almost 50% declare that their stress levels have increased over the last five years.

This alarming effects of stress are causing widespread health problems, deteriorating relationships and reduced work productivity across America. The leading causes of these increased stress levels are financial problems and work stress for 75% of Americans – up from 59% just one year earlier.

Americans report damaging effects of stress on both personal and professional relationships with a whopping 54% saying stress causes them to fight with people close to them; 25% of these people admitting that stress has alienated them from a friend or family member. In addition, 35% say their work stress interferes with family/personal time.

And in the stress health arena, the high stress levels experienced by 77% of Americans have been linked to the stress effects of fatigue, headache, upset stomach, muscle tension, change in sex drive, weight-gain, obesity, heart disease, job burnout and depression. 48% of Americans lie awake at night due to stress.

This survey has a 95% probability rating of results falling within 2% plus/minus accuracy.

Additional Statistics:

- Globally, 23% of women executives and professionals, and 19% of their male peers, say they feel super-stressed.
- The American Institute of Stress reports that one million American workers miss work everyday because of work stress.
- Two-thirds of all office visits to family physicians are due to stress-related symptoms.
- 64% of Americans say they are taking steps to reduce stress in their lives.
- 66% of Americans say they are likely to seek help for healing the effects of stress.
- 43 % of Americans confided that, due to stress anxiety, they were overeating or eating unhealthily as a way to reduce stress.
- Stress is linked to the six leading causes of death—heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide.
- 43% of adults suffer adverse health effects of stress.
- 30% of workers suffer work stress and experience back pain.
- Tranquilizers, antidepressants, and anti-anxiety medications account for one fourth of all prescriptions written in the U.S. each year as a means to reduce stress symptoms.
- 19.1 million (13.3%) of the adult US population (between 18-54 yrs.) suffer from the effects of stress in the form of anxiety and panic attacks. (Anxiety disorder = 4 million, 2.8%)
- 73 % of Americans name money problems as the number one factor that affects their stress anxiety levels.

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Sources: APA Press Release October 24, 2007; APA Press Release Nov 9, 2005; Healthy People 2000, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry; United

Nations Report; Anxiety Disorders Association of America (www.adaa.org); Washington Post
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