

**A STUDY ON THE MOST INFLUENTIAL TYPE OF STRESS  
AMONG THE PEOPLE IN VARIOUS AGE GROUPS AND ON THE  
MOST COMMON TECHNIQUE USED BY THEM TO MANAGE  
THE STRESS**

**Mr. Tushar Kumar\***

**Mr. Vivek kwatra\***

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**Abstract**

Stress is body's response to certain situations. Something that is stressful for you may not be stressful for someone else. There are many different kinds of stress and not all of them are bad. Stress can help one to act quickly in an emergency or helps to meet a deadline.

Stress can affect physical and mental health, and also the behavior of the people. The Body responds to stress by producing chemicals and hormones to help in rising to the challenge. The heart rate increases, brain works faster, and one has a sudden burst of energy. This response is basic and natural and it is what that kept our ancestors safe from hungry predators. But too much stress can have harmful effects. It's impossible to completely eliminate bad stress from one's life but how to avoid and manage it can be learned. The basic objective of this study is to determine various influential symptoms of stress in both males and females. Various symptoms of stress are identified from the journals written and research works done by the researchers. Also it has been tried to find out the most preferred techniques used by both the genders to get a relief from stress (as also found out by early researchers) through a questionnaire. A well drafted questionnaire is given to the people and conclusion is predicted through the analysis. It has been found that though males and females have different symptoms of stress on higher level but to relieve stress techniques are quite similar in them. Also some stress symptoms encountered by both the genders are found similar to some degree, as per this study.

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**\* Dewan VS Group of Institutions**

## **Introduction**

All stress are not bad. In fact, some stress heightens the senses, helping to avoid accidents, gives power through unexpected deadlines, and stay clear-minded in chaotic situations. This is “fight or flight” response that body produces to combat the challenging situations. The stress should stay temporary and body must come to natural state after a stressful situation is gone. The heart rate becomes slow, muscles relax and breathing becomes normal. Due to various pressures and demands of modern life one’s body can encounter heightened state for a long time. This makes your heart pump hard and results in constriction of blood vessels for longer period then the body could handle. All these physiological demands may hamper your bodies normal functioning.

“Psychological stress requires a judgment that environmental and/or internal demands exceed the individual’s resources for managing them” **Holroyd and Lazarus.**

## **Types of stress**

As per the various researchers and scientists there are basically three types of stress.

### **1. Acute stress**

It is the most common type of stress. It’s body's immediate reaction to a new challenge, event, or demand, and it triggers one’s fight-or-flight response. This bodily response occurs when one misses a close accident, or if there is fight with a family member .Acute stress isn't always negative. It's also comes when riding a rollercoaster or when someone just suddenly scares you.. Acute stress episodes do not have ill effect on one’s body in fact it prepares one’s body to respond better to the challenging situations in future. Severe acute stress such as stress suffered as the victim of a crime or in a life-threatening situation can lead to mental health problems, like post-traumatic stress disorder or acute stress disorder.

### **2. Episodic acute stress**

When acute stress happens frequently, it’s called episodic acute stress. People mostly have a crisis tend to have episodic acute stress. The people are often short-tempered, irritable, and anxious. People who are “worry warts” or pessimistic and who always sees a negative side of everything suffer from episodic acute stress. Negative health effects become persistent in people

with episodic acute stress. It may be hard for people with this type of stress to change their lifestyle, and they accept stress as a part of life.

### 3. Chronic stress

If acute stress is not resolved for a long time it becomes a chronic stress and never leaves. Some causes of chronic stress are

- Poverty
- Dysfunctional family
- Unhappy marriage
- A bad profession or job.

Chronic stress can contribute to several serious diseases such as:

- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Lung disease
- Accidents
- Cirrhosis of the liver
- Suicide causing thoughts.

As per the Health line editorial team under the medical review by **Timothy J. Legg** ( PhD, CRNP) the stress is just an unavoidable part of today's fast-paced and competitive world. Below are the, 7 different types of stress in people.

1. **Physical stress:** This stress is caused due to intense exertion, manual labor, lack of sleep, travel
2. **Chemical stress :** This is caused due to drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and environmental pollutants such as cleaning chemicals or pesticides
3. **Mental stress:** caused by trying to practice perfectionism, worrying in lots, having anxiety, long working hours.
4. **Emotional stress:** caused when having anger, guilt, loneliness, sadness or fear.
5. **Nutritional stress:** caused due to food allergies, vitamin and mineral deficiency
6. **Traumatic stress:** caused due to injuries or burns, surgery, illness, infections, extreme temperatures

7. **Psychological stress:** having troubled relationships, financial or career pressures, challenges with life goals, spiritual alignment and general state of happiness.

There are plenty of effective (and mostly pleasant) things to minimize and manage stress .They are:

1. **To have more fun in life.** This can be achieved by scheduling and actively pursuing activities that one enjoy and that help to relax.

2. **To express your feelings openly.** All emotions need regular venting and evolution. Stuck, unexpressed emotions cause pain and illness. So all emotions and feeling must be shared with the people you trust and love.

3. **Getting ample amount of sleep.** Poor sleep habits interfere with body's ability to rest, heal and get recharged. If one has trouble in sleeping, causes must be found and immediately addressed.

4. **To exercise on regular basis.** Regular physical exercises clears tension and builds energy. It also helps to adopt a better life perspective and to feel more in control of the circumstances.

5. **To practice relaxation.** Breathing, meditation and visualization exercises helps to let go of mental worries and allow you to experience precious moments of calm and inner peace.

6. **To develop good relations.** Building a trust worthy relations with people who can listen to you and don't judge you also people you can conform to. It is also a great feeling to be some one's true and trust worthy friend.

7. **To experience touch therapy and love.** Touch therapy like massage with special oils and having a great love relationship can also reduce stress.

8. **To change perception and attitudes.** If certain ideas don't serve well or views that conflict, in such case it is better to adapt them and examine. Playing a victim or indulging in blame game or holding one responsible should be avoided. Seeing challenges as opportunities for growth and learning, also giving spiritual direction can reduce stress too. But whether it's a spiritual practice or a daily yoga or journaling ritual, doing what one need to do to find and experience self-love, self-respect and true self-worth in benefits stress reduction

9. **To eat right.** Eating nutrient-poor foods that are high in sugar or filled with chemicals and unhealthy fats that puts an unnecessary stress on the body's system, reducing immunity, overloading liver and forcing body to work overtime just to maintain balance must be avoided.

Healthy and nourishing food supports body's natural immune and healing systems, helping it to cope successfully with other sources of stress.

The idea behind the research is to find out the most common type of stress experienced by people of today's modern society and also to identify how that stress is managed by them.

### **Research Methodology**

Data used in the research is both primary and secondary. Various journals on net and books are searched to identify the symptoms of stress experienced by people and techniques used to manage or relieve stress. The **sample size** of people is taken to be **100**, out of which **50 are males and remaining are females**. In the research a questionnaire is drafted enlisting various symptoms of stress and various techniques used to manage the stress. Participants are asked to tick the symptoms they experience during stress and tick the techniques mostly used by them to avoid or manage stress. Respective ranks are also allotted based on the closest preference of the participants in both the symptoms experienced and the technique used to manage stress.. Analysis is done with the help of tables and graphs and results are displayed along with the conclusion of the study.

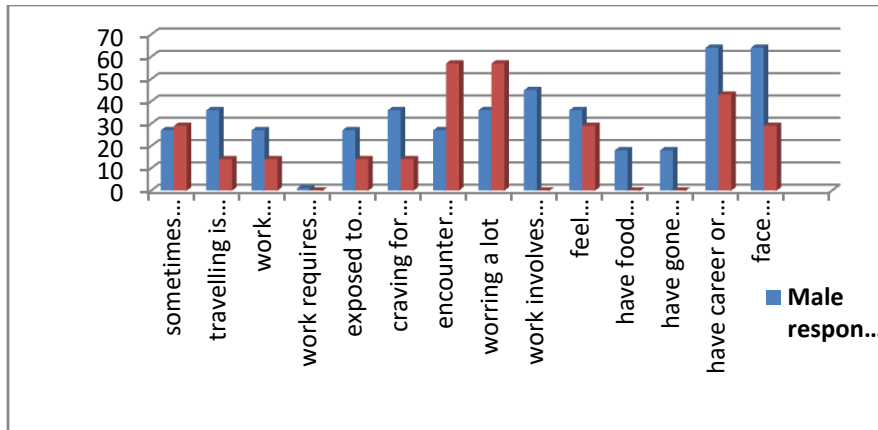
## Analysis

**Table 1.1**

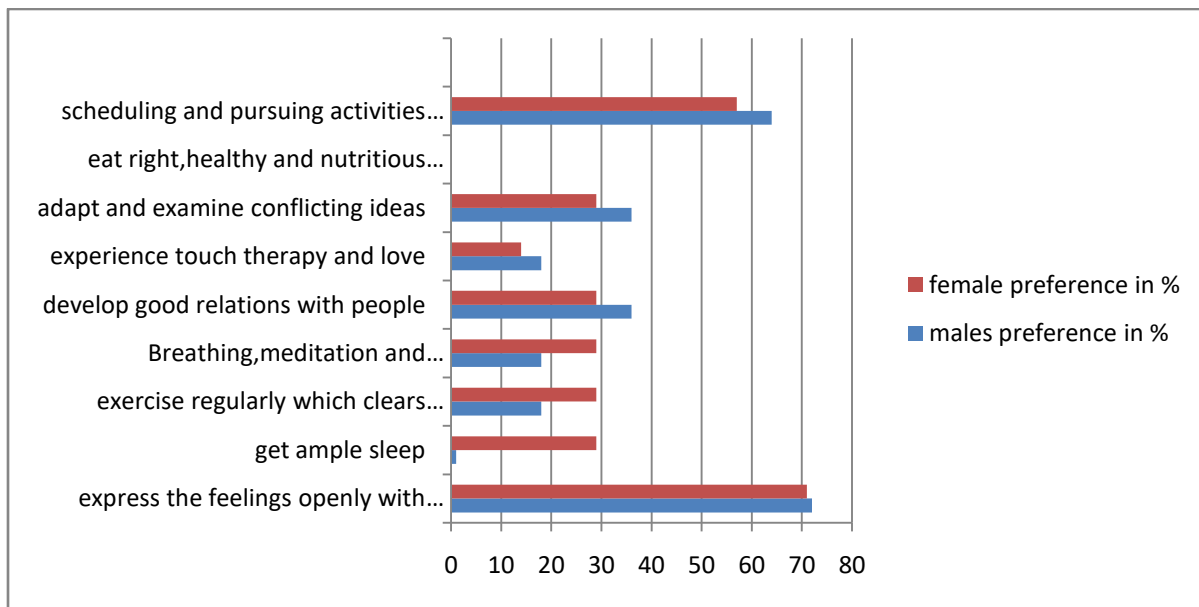
<u>Symptoms mostly encountered</u>	<u>Male response in %</u>	<u>Rank allotted by males</u>	<u>Rank allotted by females</u>	<u>Females response in %</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Some times you find problem in sleeping.	27	4	3	29
<input type="checkbox"/> You travel a lot.	36	3	4	14
<input type="checkbox"/> Your work comprises intense exertion.	27	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	14
<input type="checkbox"/> Your work requires manual job.	1	6	5	0
<input type="checkbox"/> You are exposed to chemicals, alcohol, drugs or pesticides somehow.	27	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	14
<input type="checkbox"/> You crave for perfectionism	36	3	4	14
<input type="checkbox"/> You encounter anxiety	27	4	1	57
<input type="checkbox"/> You worry a lot	36	3	1	57
<input type="checkbox"/> You work for long hours.	45	2	5	0
<input type="checkbox"/> You feel angry, sad, fear, guilt or loneliness	36	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	29
<input type="checkbox"/> You have food allergies and mineral or vitamin deficiency somewhat.	18	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	0
<input type="checkbox"/> You have gone through a surgery, or have burnt injuries.	18	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	0
<input type="checkbox"/> You have some career/financial pressure	64	1	2	43
<input type="checkbox"/> You find challenges in attaining your goals	64	1	3	29

**Table 1.2**

<b><u>If in stress which of the following activities likely you would prefer to avoid or reduce it.</u></b>	<b><u>Males response in %</u></b>	<b><u>Rank allotted by males</u></b>	<b><u>Rank allotted by females</u></b>	<b><u>Females response in %</u></b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Express your feelings openly with trust worthy people or Friends/relatives.	<b>72</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>71</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Get ample amount of sleep.	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise on regular basis which clears tension and build energy. Also helps to adopt a better life perspective and to feel more in control of the circumstances.	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Breathing, meditation and visualization exercises helps to let go of mental worries and allow you to experience precious moments of calm and inner peace.	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> To develop good relations.	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> To experience touch therapy and love. You undergo touch therapy like massage with special oils and having a great love relationship reducing stress.	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> To change perception and attitudes. If certain ideas don't serve well or views that conflict, in such case you adapt them and examine.	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> To eat right, Healthy and nourishing food that supports body's natural immune and healing systems, helping it to cope successfully with other sources of stress.	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduling and pursuing activities that you enjoy and that relax You.	<b>64</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>57</b>



**Comparison of Symptoms encountered by males and females in % (chart 1.3)**

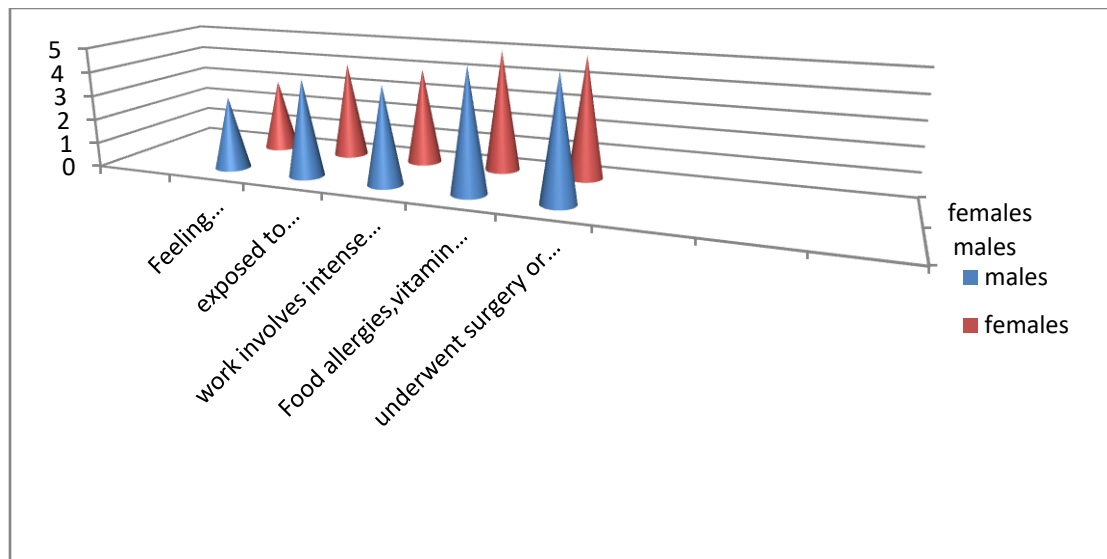


**Techniques most preferred by males and females in percentage (%) (chart 1.4)**

It can be said by looking at table 1.1 that both males and females encounter different symptoms. Males are found to be suffering more from psychological stress as they have high career or financial pressures. Also they mostly face challenges to achieve their goals leading to psychological stress. (Both the symptoms are ranked 1 by males as the mostly experienced symptoms). On the other hand females exhibit symptoms of anxiety and worrying a lot. (ranked 1 by females). This causes mental stress in them. Also if we see the ranks allotted by males and



females in table 1.1 it is found that both males and females face sadness, loneliness, guilt and anger leading to **emotional stress**.(rank 3 by both males and females).Also in today's busy life people work for long hours and their work involves **intense exertion leading to physical stress**. This factor is also a common symptom that males and females experience (rank 4). Also getting exposed to chemicals, drugs, alcohol or pollutants is very common in males and females (rank 4) which leads to **chemical stress** in both the genders. From table 1.1 above it can be also pointed out that both the genders face stress due to lack of certain vitamins and minerals also due to food allergies leading to **nutritional stress (rank 5)**. Both the genders also have ranked same the trauma due to burnt injuries or due to surgery leading to **traumatic stress**.(rank 5).



### **Common symptoms in both the genders by ranking (chart 1.5)**

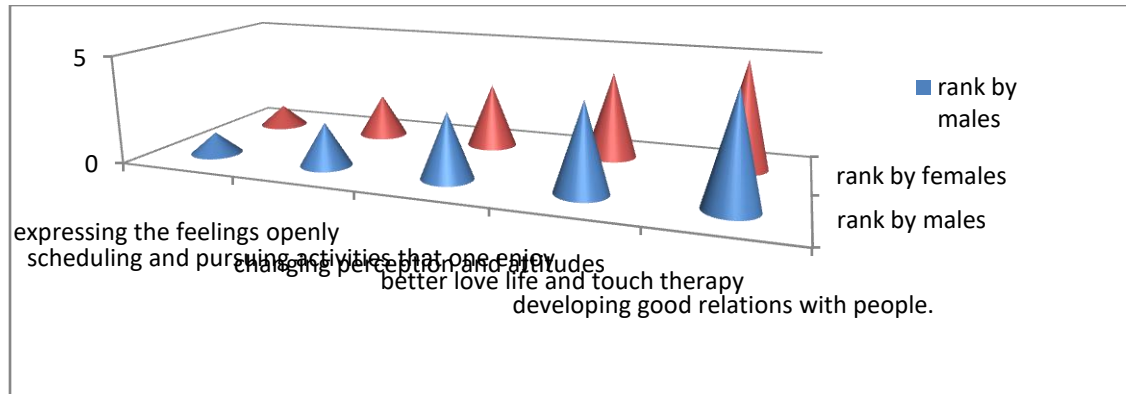
From the table 1.1 and chart 1.5 above, it is evident that chemical stress which is because of exposure to chemicals, drugs, alcohol, pesticides etc is commonly experienced by both males and females.(rank 4). Also both the genders work in the environment which involves intense exertion so both also suffer from physical stress(rank 4). Both the genders feel angry, loneliness, sadness and guilt so they suffer from common emotional stress (rank 3). Males and females also have food allergies and lack of vitamin or minerals to some level leading to nutritional stress.(rank 5).

From the table 1.2 the best technique preferred by males and females in relieving stress is by openly **expressing their feelings to** the trust worthy people, friends or relatives.(rank 1 by both the genders). Also the technique preferred by both the genders to relieve stress is **scheduling and**

**pursuing the activities they enjoy or which relaxes them** (rank 2). **Changing perceptions** and attitude towards conflicting thoughts and examining them to have a better perspective towards life is also the common technique used by both the genders to relieve stress (rank 3). Also it can be pointed out that going **for better love life and touch therapy** with special oils or massage is also the commonly used technique by both the genders to relieve stress (rank 4). **Developing healthy and good relations** with people to be in a comfort zone is also the commonly used technique to relieve stress by both the genders (rank 3).

## Results

1. Males and females exhibit different symptoms of stress.
2. Males likely suffer more by psychological stress as they have high career or financial pressure. Also they face More challenges in achieving their goals leading to further psychological stress.
3. Females have more anxiety problems and they are prone to worrying a lot leading to higher mental stress.
4. Some of the stresses like emotional, physical, chemical, nutritional and traumatic stress are commonly existent in both the genders.
5. Both the genders relieve stress by using the technique to openly express their feelings to friends, relatives or other trust worthy people.
6. Scheduling and pursuing activities found enjoyable and that helps to relax, is the another common technique used by the both males and females to get relief from stress.



**Chart 1.6 showing common techniques used by males and females to relieve stress based on allotted ranks by them.**

7. Changing perception and attitudes towards the conflicting thoughts and examining them to have a better perspective towards life is also the common technique in both the genders to relieve stress.

8. Practicing a better love life and going for touch therapy like massage is also a very common technique used by both the genders to relieve stress.

9. To get the rid of stress, developing good friendly relations with people around is another technique very commonly used by males and females.

### **Conclusion**

It can be said that males exhibit more symptoms of psychological stress and females exhibit symptoms of mental stress. The reason being the males suffering from high career or financial pressures and also they are being more prone to face challenges in achieving their set goals. Females have more anxieties and worrying a lot problem making them prone to mental stress on higher level. Both the genders commonly experience chemical, traumatic, nutritional, physical and emotional stress. Also both the genders relieve stress by openly expressing their feelings to friends, relatives or trust worthy people. Scheduling and pursuing activities that are enjoyable and changing attitudes and perceptions towards conflicting thoughts by examining them, developing good friendly relations with people around and practicing better love life and touch therapy are some other common techniques used by both the genders to relieve stress.

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