

When should you seek help?

Consider how you have felt over the past 6 months, and rate your response to the following statements:

	Never 1pt	Rarely 2 pts	Sometimes 3 pts	Fairly Often 4 pts	Always 5 pts
1. I feel tired or have lack of energy.					
2. I have trouble sitting still or concentrating.					
3. I have problems getting to or staying asleep at night.					
4. I feel pain in my chest and shortness of breath.					
5. I am constipated or have diarrhea.					
6. I feel nervous, and shake or sweat a lot.					
7. I have an upset stomach and muscle aches, especially in my back, neck or shoulders.					
8. I have headaches.					
9. I smoke and/or drink alcohol.					
10. I have gained or lost more than 10 pounds.					

(Cont. on Back)

**YOUR TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## **SCORING:**

### **10-20 points**

You have a low level of stress and/or you are doing a good job of managing stress. While stress and anxiety are not currently affecting your health, you still need to be aware of the signs and symptoms.

### **20 to 30 points**

Stress may be starting to affect your health. You may want to discuss stress management techniques with your healthcare provider. In addition, examine those questions that earned a high score. Can you determine the source of these difficulties? Are there things you can do right away to help reduce stress in those areas?

### **30 to 40 points**

Stress is starting to affect your health in a negative way. Talk to your health care provider about ways to bring stress under control.

### **40 to 50 points**

You are at risk for stress-related illnesses. It's time to take action. See your doctor.

### **Physical Warning Signs**

Chronic stress can wear down the body's natural defenses, leading to a variety of physical symptoms, including the following:

- Cold and sweaty palms
- Dizziness or a general feeling of "being out of it"
- General aches and pains
- Grinding teeth, clenched jaw
- Headaches
- Increase in or loss of appetite
- Indigestion
- Muscle tension in neck, face or shoulders
- Problems sleeping
- Racing heart
- Sexual difficulties
- Tiredness, exhaustion
- Trembling/shaking
- Upset stomach
- Weight gain or loss

### **The Effects of Stress on Your Body**

The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. The human body is designed to experience stress and react to it. Stress can be positive, keeping us alert and ready to avoid danger. Stress becomes negative when a person faces continuous challenges without relief or relaxation between challenges. As a result, the person becomes overworked, and stress-related tension builds. Stress that continues without relief can lead to a condition called distress—a negative stress reaction. Distress can disturb the body's internal balance or equilibrium—leading to physical symptoms including headaches, upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain, and problems sleeping. Research suggests that stress also can bring on or worsen certain symptoms or diseases.

### **Tips for Reducing Stress**

- Keep a positive attitude.
- Accept that there are events that you cannot control.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques.
- Exercise regularly. Your body can fight stress better when it is fit.
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
- Get enough rest and sleep. Your body needs time to recover from stressful events.
- Don't rely on alcohol or drugs to reduce stress.
- Seek out social support.
- Learn to manage your time efficiently.

### **Resources:**

- Student Health Services Wellness Center (West Entrance): Health Educators are available to help you learn ways to reduce your stress. Call (909) 869-4000 for an appointment.
- CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services), Bldg. 66. Call (909) 869-3220 for an appointment.