

MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS **RESEARCH SUMMARY**

TOPIC: COVID STRESS AND NEWBORN BRAINS
REPORT: MB #4790

BACKGROUND: Stress can actually be a positive or negative force. It's positive as it motivates us to perform well at a task, but negative if it moves us to anxious thoughts and feelings. If stress is experienced over a prolonged period, it could become chronic. When stress starts interfering with the ability to live a normal life for an extended period, it becomes even more dangerous. The longer stress lasts, the worse it is for both your mind and body. You can become fatigued, unable to concentrate, or irritable for no reason. Chronic stress causes wear and tear on your body, too. It may cause disease, either because of changes in your body, or from overeating, smoking and other bad habits people use to cope with stress. Another form of chronic stress is depression.

(Source: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-facts>)

AFFECT ON HEALTH BY REDUCING STRESS: Reducing stress levels can make you feel better and help protect your health long-term. Researchers examined the association between feelings like happiness, joy, contentment and enthusiasm, and the development of coronary heart disease over a decade. They found that for every one-point increase in positive affect on a five-point scale, the rate of heart disease dropped by 22 percent. While the study doesn't prove that increasing positive affect decreases cardiovascular risks, the researchers recommend boosting your positive affect by making a little time for enjoyable activities every day.

(Source: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-facts>)

STRESS AND MALE FERTILITY: A study published in Fertility and Sterility, and led by researchers from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health in New York, NY, and Rutgers School of Public Health in Piscataway, NJ, investigated whether stress may affect sperm and semen quality. The researchers assessed 193 men aged 38 to 49 who were required to complete a series of tests that measured levels of stress, including that from the workplace, stressful life events and overall perceived stress. They also were required to provide semen samples. Researchers from the University of California, Davis, analyzed the semen concentration, sperm shape and movement in each sample. They found that men who experienced two or more stressful life events in the past year had a lower percentage of sperm motility and a lower percentage of sperm of normal morphology, compared to those who did not experience any stressful events. Researchers also found those who experienced job strains had lower levels of testosterone in their semen, which could affect reproductive health.

(Source: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/277543>)

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If this story or any other Ivanhoe story has impacted your life or prompted you or someone you know to seek or change treatments, please let us know by contacting Marjorie Bekaert Thomas at mthomas@ivanhoe.com