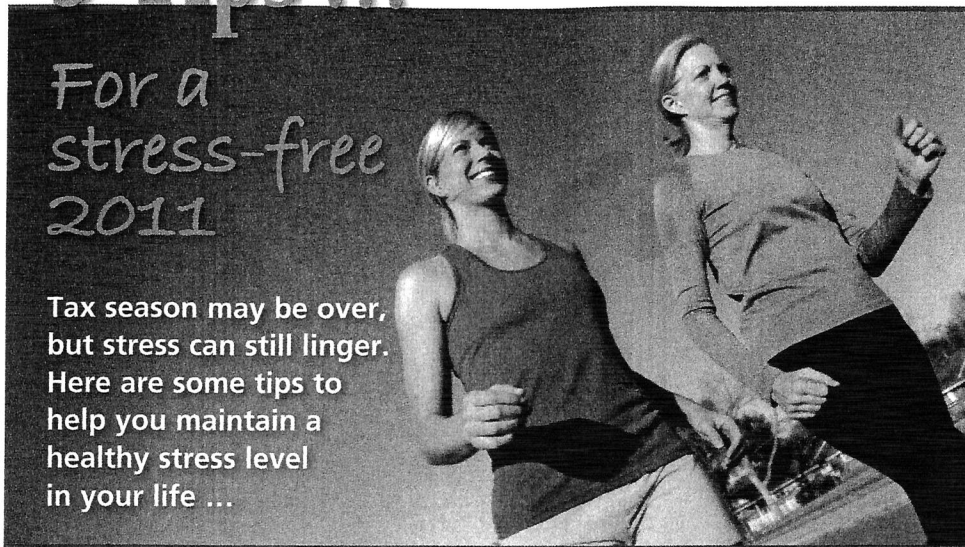


5 Tips ...

For a stress-free 2011

Tax season may be over, but stress can still linger. Here are some tips to help you maintain a healthy stress level in your life ...



1 Exercise regularly

An active lifestyle can reduce one's stress level. Take advantage of activities that can be fun and simple—bring a friend along for an energy boost and to help exercise your body and mind. By walking to work, taking up a winter sport, or even opting for the stairs instead of the elevator—you can keep yourself fit and active without spending hours at the gym.

2 Eat properly

A healthy diet is essential—you are what you eat. An adequate amount of vitamins, dietary fiber, and protein keep your brain functioning and your metabolism working up to speed. You may want to reduce caffeine which can disrupt your sleep cycle, and avoid soda consumption during the afternoon to avoid excess sugars and a sluggish, loss-of-energy feeling.

3 Get sleep

And, get enough of it. According to WebMD.com, most adults require between 7 and 8 hours of sleep a night. If you are able to improve your sleeping habits, you are able to wake up refreshed and energized to tackle the day. When you are more alert and productive, you decrease your stress levels and also improve your sleep routine.

4 Set goals

Set the bar at a reasonable height—goals you can achieve and expect from yourself. Assess where your energy level is and don't set a goal that is ultimately setting you up for failure. Achieving the goals you set can help to decrease the influence of stress in other areas of your life.

5 Find your financial balance

Financial problems drastically add to stress causing you to fall behind in your lifestyle goals. Make it a priority to speak to your financial advisor as often as you need to ensure your investments are still where you want them to be. Be sure to review your retirement options: Are they still working or is it time to adjust your plans? Ask questions and look for answers that will help aid in a stress-free environment.

Sources: www.healthhubarticles.com and www.webmd.com.