

worksheet: the stress-o-meter

TO FIND OUT if your stress level is jeopardizing your health, take this quiz (developed with the help of Edward Hallowell, M.D., founder of the Hallowell Center for Cognitive and Emotional Health, in Sudbury, Massachusetts). Circle those that apply to you and add them up to see whether your score suggests a serious level of stress.

Over the past few months, have you:

1. Taken up the nail-biting habit you kicked in the seventh grade?
2. Found yourself irritated in situations in which you can't multitask?
3. Been sleeping too little or too much?
4. Been waking in the wee hours thinking about all that you've left undone?
5. Had muscle aches, especially in your back and neck?
6. Felt angry more than usual?
7. Had a chronically upset stomach?
8. Been eating more or less than you normally do?
9. Felt utterly uninterested in sex?

If you answered yes to more than half these questions, stress might be affecting your health. Try to make changes on your own. If that doesn't work, seeking professional help may well be worth the effort.