

Staying Healthy in the High Stress Job

By Laura Brown, Certified Health Counselor

Throughout the twenty-plus years I spent as an IT and business consultant, I saw and experienced firsthand the results of high stress work environments. They include burnout, health problems, stress-based eating, and weight gain, among other problems. Due to many years spent coping with on the job pressure, many busy professionals find themselves facing chronic disease and its precursors: high cholesterol, hypertension and insulin resistance.

So what can you do to stay healthy when you're in a busy, stressful profession? Here are a few tips for staying healthy no matter the demands of your work:

- **Take adequate breaks (especially from close work)** - once every hour get up and walk around, go talk to someone, find reasons to move, take a walk, jump up and down a few times. Any and all of these can increase circulation and breathing.
- **Learn exercises you can do at your desk** (for example, see Ten Ways to Exercise at Your Desk online at <http://www.mikedangelo.com/health/articles/deskfitness/>)
- **Adopt a practice** such as Qi Gong, Tai Chi or Yoga to keep your spine flexible - Qi Gong is my favorite exercise - low impact, fun to do, painless - flexibility helps your body absorb the impacts and stresses of daily life.
- **Take a healthy lunch** (or eat out healthy) - Thai food is often light, healthy and digestible. For a new definition of healthy eating (taken from ancient wisdom - what's old is new again...) check out Nourishing Traditions by Sally Fallon, "challenging the diet dictocrats" - backed up by solid research.
- **Drink soothing herbal teas** to reduce stress and the possibility of inflammation (aching joints and back) - Passionflower vine is my first choice, although there are many herbal blends on the market that can help, and the fluids help you stay hydrated too. See Traditional Medicinals for a good brand.

- **Learn to meditate** to help you stay calm, focused and centered - adopting a daily practice of meditation can lower blood pressure and improve many health markers. It slows and deepens your breathing and pulse, while increasing available oxygen in your system. And going deep into meditation can put you in touch with sources of inspiration and give you access to your own internal reserves.
- **Drink plenty of water** and make sure you take in enough salt - dehydration contributes to problems from aching joints to high blood pressure. Most of us don't drink enough water to stay hydrated and with today's low-salt diets, we sometimes forget salt is absolutely needed by the body to function properly.
- **Slow down!** In Grayton Beach, Florida, a favorite vacation spot, there's a sign at the end of the road that reads "Slow down - you've arrived!". You've arrived - you got the job - sometimes the best way to keep it, not to mention enjoy it, is to pace yourself.

About Laura Brown

Laura Brown is a Certified Health Counselor (CHC) and the founder of Intuitive Wellness. A Certified Health Counselor is a nutrition expert, wellness authority and a supportive coach.

Laura is passionate about helping people achieve their highest level of wellness. For over thirty years, Laura has pursued an interest in personal growth and alternative healing and in exploring the mind/body connection.

In 2007, Laura took that passion a step further when she earned her (CHC) designation at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN), studying an approach that enabled her to integrate the many paths to wellness she has traveled in her life into a powerful program for helping others.

Laura speaks regularly at health-oriented events, conferences, educational and other organizations, on topics such as Eating for Energy, Brain Health, Longevity and Preventing Illness through diet and lifestyle.

To schedule a free one-hour health consultation with Laura, go to www.intuitive-wellness.com, email Laura at laura@intuitive-wellness.com, or call 770-953-0534.