



**WELCOME TO**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING**  
**AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,**  
**ZARIA**

**4<sup>TH</sup> PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES**  
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# **Managing Academic Stress**

**By**

**DR A. B. ALIYU**

**(Facilitator)**

**Department of Chemistry  
Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria**

# **Outline of Presentation**

- 1. Introduction/Lit. Review**
- 2. What is stress?**
- 3. Perception about stress**
- 4. Symptoms of (academic) stress**
- 5. Factors that aggravates stress**
- 6. Managing academic stress**
- 7. Stress diagnosis using PSS**
- 8. Academic stress relieving activity**
- 9. Short video (Summary)**

# **1. Introduction/Lit. Review**

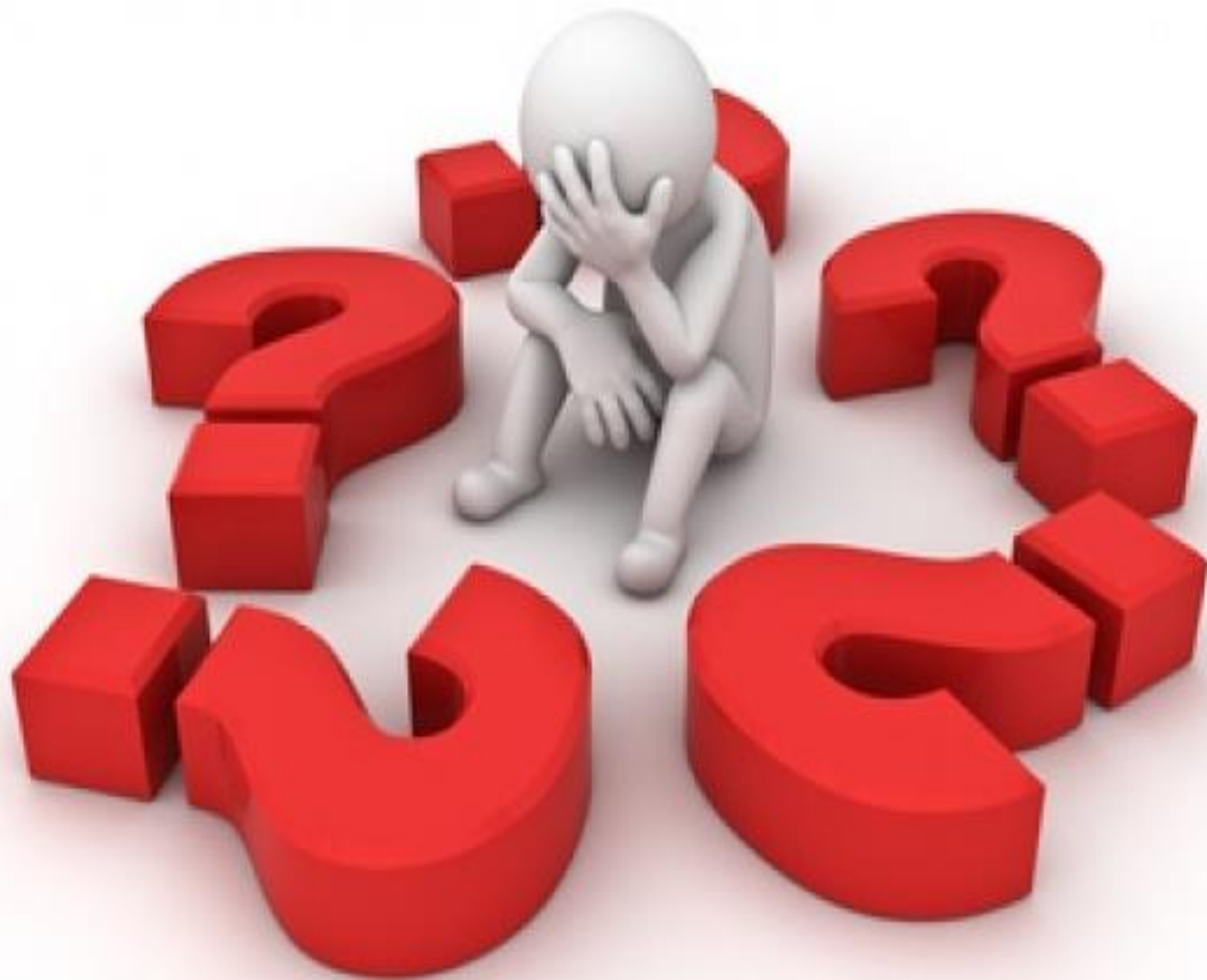
**Stress is an important factor affecting academic performance. We need to understand stress, what causes it and the factors that aggravate stress.**

**It is anticipated that understanding the concepts of stress would help manage academic lives especially at this period of Examination.**

**Overwhelming literature reports have indicated the detrimental effects of stress on academic performance.**

# **What is stress?**

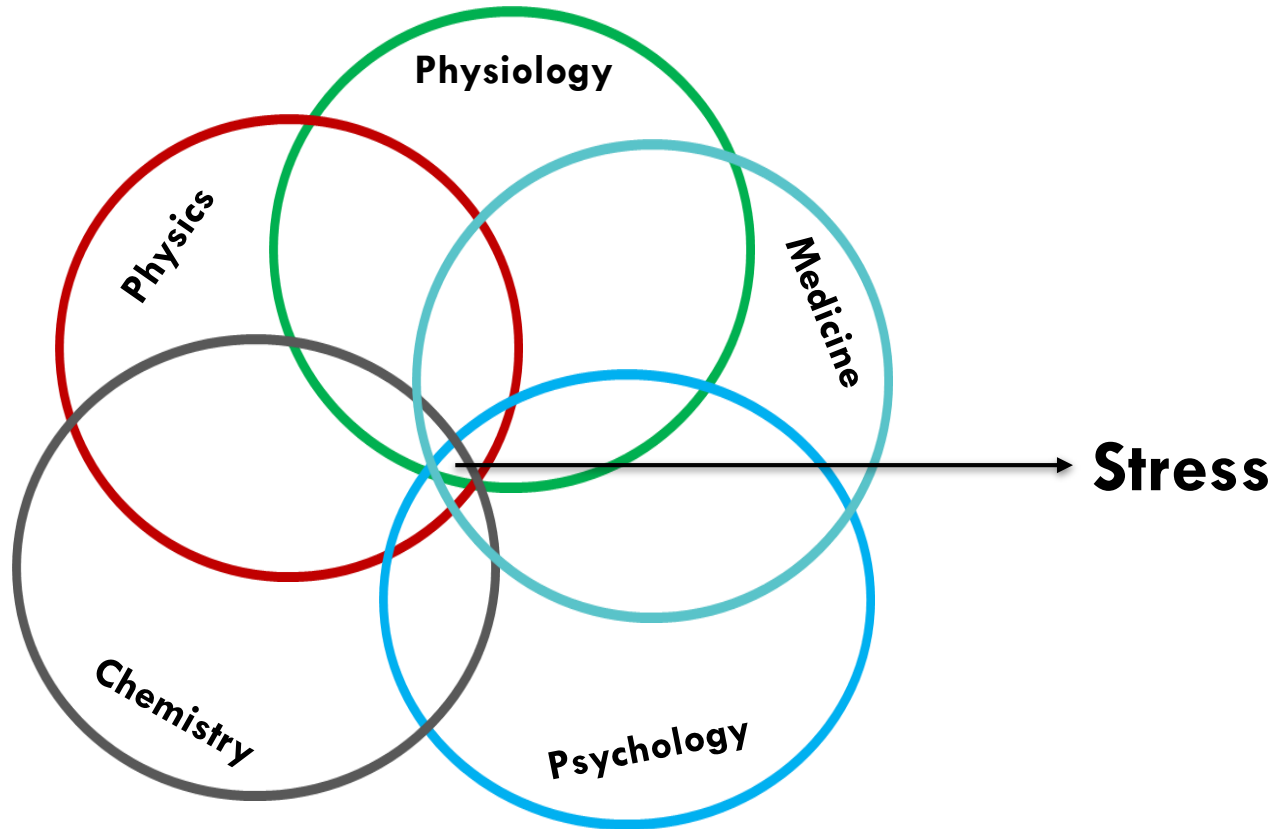






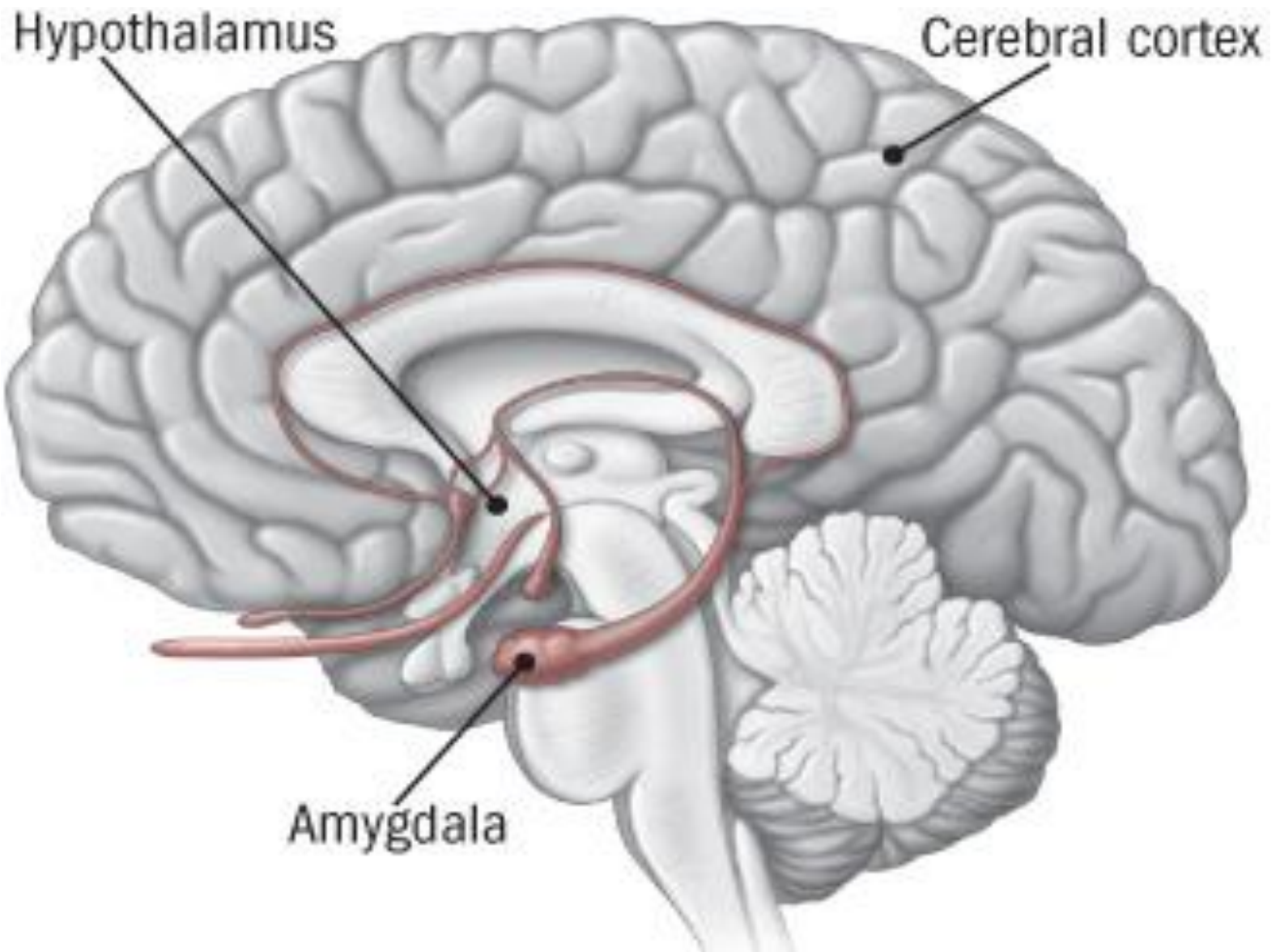


## 2. What is Stress?

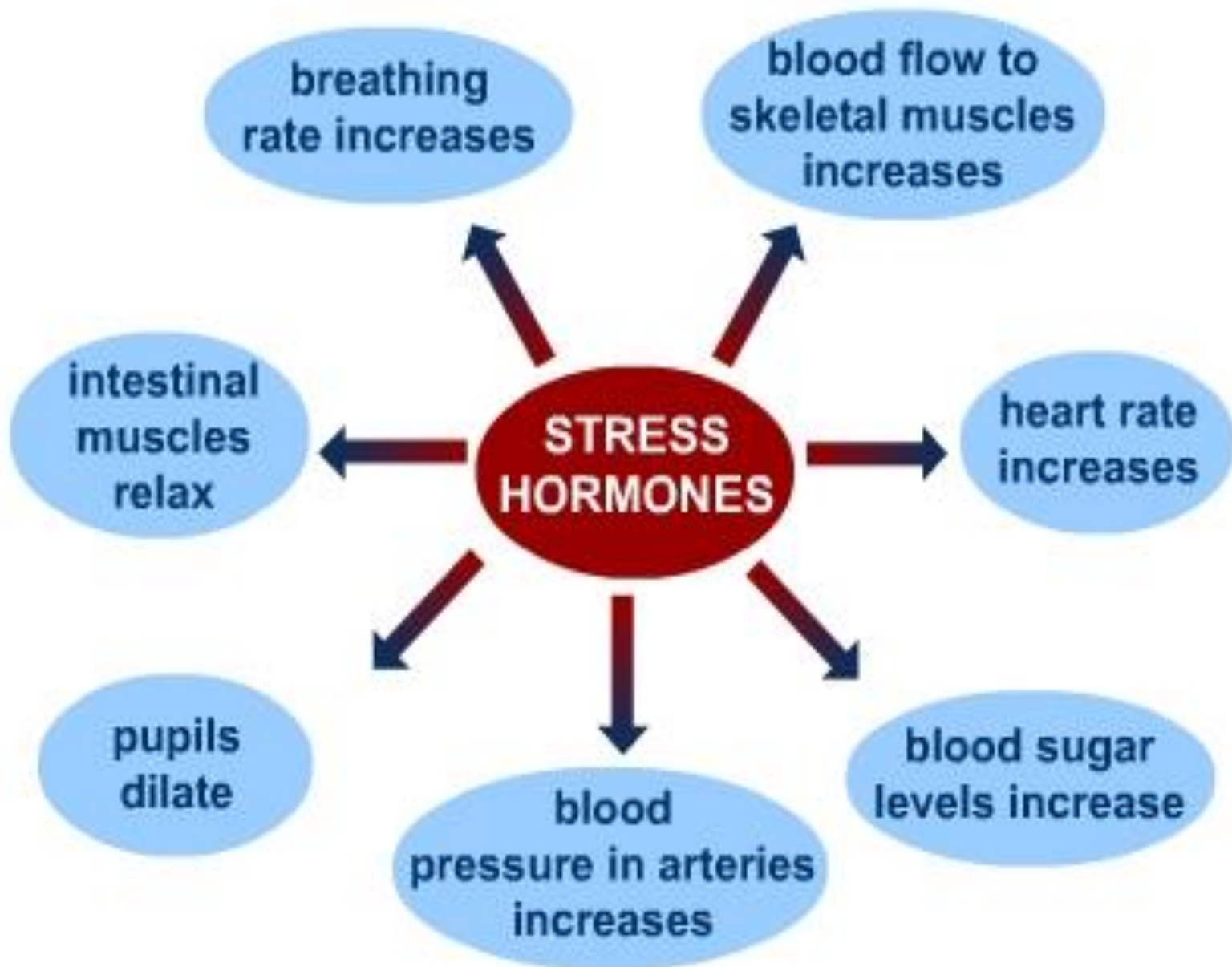


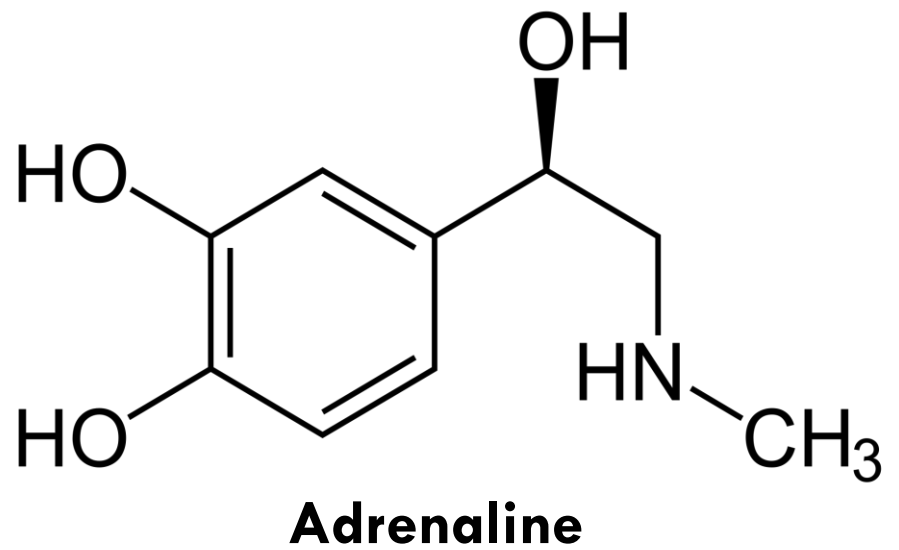
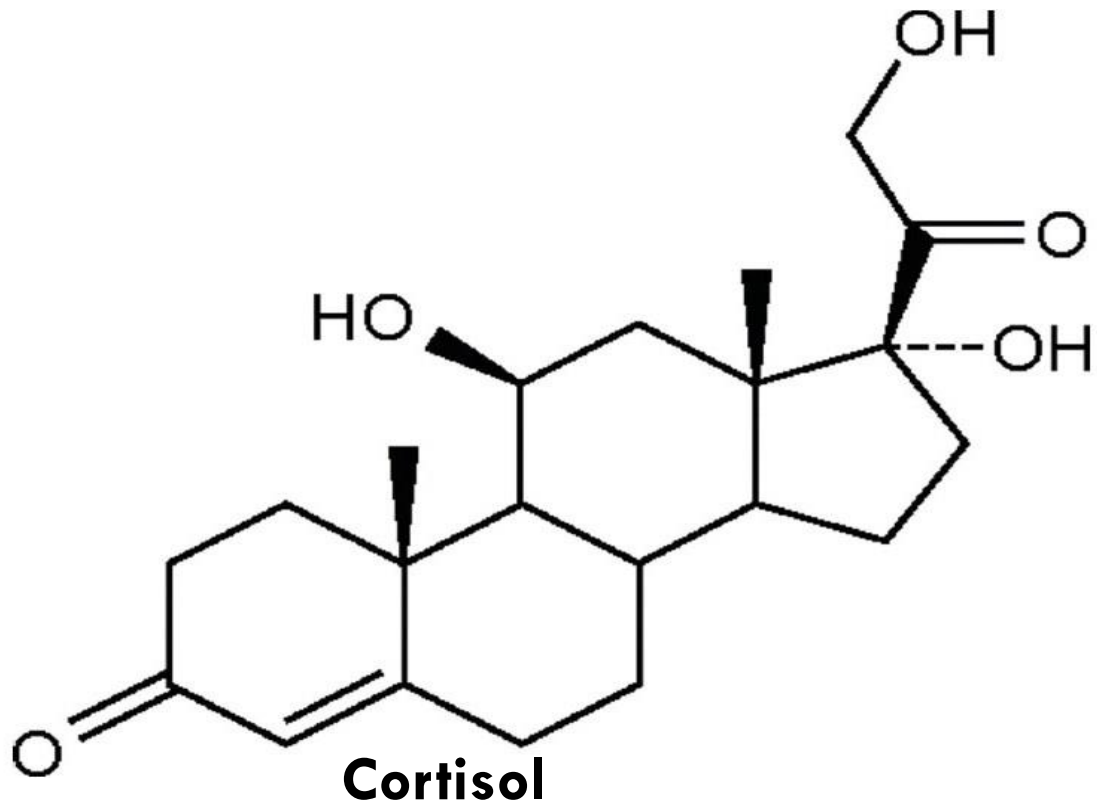
## **2. What is Stress?**

- ❖ When a person feels under pressure from a particular situation and the body reacts accordingly. Hormones are released to prepare the body for action. The heartbeat increases and blood pressure rises (Behere et al., 2011).**
- ❖ Stress is the “wear and tear” our bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment; with physical and emotional effects on us.**
- ❖ Stress is any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes (APA).**



## HUMAN BRAIN





### 3. Perception about stress

- ❖ **Stress is a normal response to an anticipated event primarily determined by our perception.**
- ❖ **Stress can have beneficial and negative effects, because we are likely to respond differently to a given situation**

#### **(a) Positive view of stress**

**Stress can help compel us to achieve a set of datelines:**

- ✓ **Practical reports**
- ✓ **Assignment**
- ✓ **Writing exams**
- ✓ **Project write up**
- ✓ **Seminar presentation**

## (b) Negative view of stress

- ❖ When stress is perceived as a **threat**, then it manifest in the physical, emotional or psychological aspect of our lives



❖ **Finding a balance becomes challenging**



❖ **It gets out of control**

❖ **Studies become very difficult task**





## 4. Symptoms of academic stress

Poor reading comprehension

Memory blocks

Loss of appetite

Poor attention

Sweating

Feeling tired

Feeling sick

Poor sleeping

Shortness of breath

Rapid heart beat

Fear of failing exam

# 5. Factors that aggravate stress

There are three (3) major factors that aggravate stress

## (a) Environmental factors

- Poor hostel condition, pollution or noise etc.

## (b) Academic factors

- Academic pressure: course workload
- Poor lecturing
- Lower grades
- Many hours of studies

## (c) Personal factors

- Peer group pressure especially negative influence
- Pressure from parents to succeed in exams
- Sickness or death of a family member
- Money to cope with life especially during exams
- Problem with time management

# **How can we manage [academic] Stress?**

## **6. Managing academic stress**

**There are two (2) effective ways of managing academic stress:**

- 1. Work on what you have control over (how you study, what you study, how you plan time etc.).**
- 2. Do not worry about what you can't control (kinds of exam questions, how other students perform etc.)**



# **COMMON TIPS**

**To help you manage  
academic stress**

## (i). PRIORITIZE YOUR ACTIVITIES



**(ii). PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE**





## **(iii). DEVELOP A SUPPORT SYSTEM**



# (iv). GET PHYSICAL

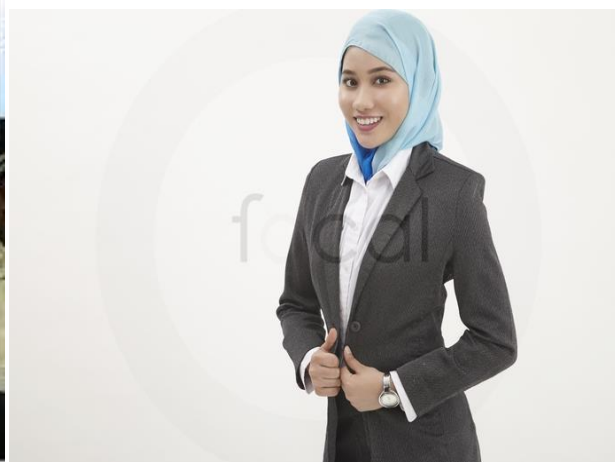


## (v). POSITIVE THINKING





## (vi). **STAY CLEAN**



**(vii). PRACTICE TO RELAX**



## (viii). SLEEP WELL



## **7. Stress diagnosis using PSS**

**Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a classic stress management instrument used to understand how sensitive you are to stress.**

**Read carefully and respond to the questions:**

**The Scale: 1-(almost always)  
5-(almost never)**

## **8. Academic stress relieving activity**

**Let us follow a demonstration by Nadia  
who will take us through some stress  
management activity**





# 1. **Activate your brain**

- ❖ **Place hand on stomach below belly button.**
- ❖ **With thumb and middle finger, find hollows below collar bone.**
- ❖ **Press firmly and rotate**



## 2. Calm yourself

- ❖ **Cross feet.**
- ❖ **Stretch arms out in front with palms towards each other.**
- ❖ **Turn hands under and link them.**
- ❖ **Close eyes and breathe deeply and slowly.**



### **3. Wake yourself up**

- ❖ With tips of fingers pressing firmly, rub all the way around the edge of your earlobe**



## **4. Ease tension in your shoulders**

- ❖ Lift your shoulders up as far as possible.**
- ❖ Squeeze tightly.**
- ❖ Hold for at least thirty seconds.**
- ❖ Relax**

**So where are you on the  
PSS ?**

## 9. Results of PSS Diagnosis

ADD UP THE SUBTOTAL AND SUBTRACT 20 FROM IT

THE PSS RESULTS:

1.FROM 30 AND ABOVE=VULNERABLE TO STRESS

2.FROM 50-75 =SERIOUSLY VULNERABLE TO STRESS

3.FROM 75 AND ABOVE= EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO STRESS

**Short video titled:**

**Conquering exam stress: Lessons  
from our bodies (2 min:31sec)**

# Con**clusion**





- 1. Stress is just our response to events, but our perception determines how we react**
- 2. Stress is good to help us achieve our goals, although some factors aggravate our stress levels**
- 3. Stress can still be managed by adapting to common stress relieving techniques especially during the exams.**
- 4. When we believe in ourselves, we would surely manage stress!**

THANK  
YOU