

STRESS RELIEF

By Drs. Boyd & Cindy Williams

Stress wears us out physically and emotionally. A majority of the patients we see every day tell us they believe that the problems they are experiencing are due to being stressed out.

Stress on our bodies does cause physical harm. The link between stress and heart disease, respiratory conditions like asthma, intestinal problems, and menstrual difficulties is well recognized. Also, common headaches and migraines can be brought on or worsened by stress. Stress can also aggravate existing health problems. For example, it often exaggerates the symptoms of multiple sclerosis and diabetes. Emotional problems like anxiety and depression are frequently stress-related.

How do we counteract the affects of stress? A healthy lifestyle is, of course, necessary. This means a healthy diet and plenty of rest. **However, the next best thing you can do to relieve the effects of stress is exercise!** Exercise relieves stress in several ways and, according to a 1996 Report of the Surgeon General, provides the following benefits:

- Reduces the risk of dying prematurely
- Reduces the risk of dying of heart disease
- Reduces the risk of developing diabetes
- Helps reduce the risk of developing colon cancer
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety
- Helps control weight
- Helps build and maintain health bones, muscles, and joints
- Helps older adults become stronger and better able to move about without falling
- Promotes psychological well-being

The Surgeon General also reports that more than 60 percent of US adults do not engage in the recommended amount of activity. If you need help with how to begin an effective exercise program, go to www.creatingfamilywellness.com or call 281-4878.