

## Healthy Living Tips From



200 Trenton Road • Browns Mills, NJ 08015

### A HEART-TO-HEART ABOUT **STRESS**

**Stress**—it's that little six-letter word associated with daylong coffee binges, nail-biting and anxiety.

In some cases, stress isn't a bad thing. You might find the added pressure helps you get more done at work or increases your energy levels. Still, extended periods of stress can be harmful to your health, because it leaves your heart exposed to high levels of stress hormones known as "catecholamines."

Left unchecked, stress can help trigger a host of problems, including:

- Increased heart rates and high blood pressure
- Abnormal heart rhythms
- Artery damage, including coronary artery disease
- Bad habits such as smoking, overeating, and drug and alcohol abuse
- Difficulty breathing
- Heart failure and stroke

Harvard researchers found that women with highly stressful jobs were 40% more likely to develop heart disease than colleagues facing less stress.

#### **SENDING STRESS ON ITS WAY**

When you're facing a stressful situation, managing it may seem like an impossible task. But for the sake of your heart, try these tips:

**Figure out the cause of the stress and address it.** Is it your desk buried under piles of work? Make sure to take a time out of your workday to relax, such as a leisurely stroll on your lunch break -- and get in those short breaks, too!

**Be good to your body.** Don't turn to greasy, high-calorie, high-fat fast food -- focus on healthy fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Exercise on most days, don't drink alcohol in excess or take drugs. Give your body the rest it needs by getting into a regular sleep routine (aim for at least 7-8 hours' sleep a night).

**Talk it out.** Take the risk -- open up about your problems with a loved one, or find a trusted friend who can lend support and give practical counsel.

**Learn the art of relaxation.** Techniques include slow, deep breathing and focused imagery (pushing stress aside in favor of a relaxing image).

It is possible to win the battle with stress -- and to the victor goes a healthy, more balanced and enjoyable life!

*For questions or an appointment with a Deborah Heart and Lung Center specialist:  
855.805.3549 or request an appointment online: [www.demandDeborah.org](http://www.demandDeborah.org).*