

WHAT IS STRESS? True or false quiz

Which of these descriptions of 'stress' are accurate? Tick the box you think is correct in each case.

STRESS IS...	
Pressure	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
A Medical Diagnosis	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
A physical and emotional response to threatening situations or the anticipation	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
A sign of weakness only experienced by those who are vulnerable	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
An adverse reaction to excessive pressure	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
A risk to anyone who is exposed to difficult circumstances on an on-going basis	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
Joint responsibility fo employer and employee	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
All in the mind	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
Something that has potential to cause ill-health	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>
Up to employers to sort out	True <input type="checkbox"/> False <input type="checkbox"/>

Go to the next page for the answers to this exercise.

TRUE OR FALSE? Answers

STRESS IS NOT:	STRESS IS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse reaction to excessive pressure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Diagnosis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something that has the potential to cause ill-health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All in the mind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and emotional response to threatening situations or the anticipation of threat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign of weakness only experienced by those who are vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk to anyone who is exposed to difficult circumstances on an on-going basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to employers to sort out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint responsibility of employer and employee

**THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE DEFINES STRESS AS...
'THE ADVERSE REACTION PEOPLE HAVE TO EXCESSIVE PRESSURE OR OTHER
TYPES OF DEMAND PLACED ON THEM'**

UNDERSTANDING THE 'ADVERSE REACTION'

The 'adverse reaction' to which the HSE definition is referring is also known as the 'fight or flight response'. To our ancestors, this response was an essential tool for survival, evolved over many thousands of years living in wild and dangerous places. In those days it gave us the ability to prepare our bodies to fight whatever was threatening our life or run away from it as fast possible. Living in the twenty-first century, it can still be an effective response to danger (e.g. running out of the way to avoid an oncoming bus that we didn't see when crossing the road). However, it can also be an ineffective response, particularly for situations that don't require fighting or fleeing: in fact, it can actually prevent us from responding effectively in some situations.

When we perceive something as a threat, or potential threat our brain releases adrenaline into our system, which starts the fight or flight response. This helps prepare the body for vigorous emergency action. List the things you know happen during the flight or flight response.

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