**Stress Basics**
- **Stressors** are events that trigger reactions
- **Stress response** is the physiological and emotional response to stressors
- Nervous and endocrine systems produce physical reactions to stressors

**Physical Responses to Stress**
- Autonomic nervous system
  - parasympathetic (relaxed state)
  - sympathetic (fight-or-flight reaction)
- Endocrine system
  - releases hormones: cortisol, epinephrine, norepinephrine
  - The hormones trigger physiological changes

**Emotional and Behavioral Responses to Stressors**
- Common emotional responses such as anxiety, depression, and fear can often be moderated or controlled
- The somatic nervous system manages our behavioral responses, which are entirely under our control
  - Effective responses
  - Ineffective responses

**Factors Influencing Emotional & Behavioral Responses to Stressors**
- Influences include temperament, health, life experiences, values, and coping skills
- Individuals with “Type A” personalities tend to react more explosively to stressors and have difficulty coping
- People with “hardy” personalities view stressors as challenges and learning opportunities
- Past experiences can influence the perception of a potential stressor

**Stress and Disease**
- Long-term stress is linked to:
  - increase in cardiovascular disease
  - impairment of immune system
  - digestive problems
  - tension headaches
  - insomnia and fatigue
  - Injuries
  - depression and other psychological problems

**General Adaptation Syndrome**
- Two categories of stress
  - eustress: stress triggered by pleasant stressor
  - distress: stress triggered by unpleasant stressor
- Predictable stages
  - alarm (fight-or-flight response)
  - resistance (homeostasis)
  - exhaustion (too much stress)
Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI)

- PNI is the study of the interactions among the nervous system, the endocrine system, and the immune system.
- The compounds released during the stress response influence the immune system by affecting the number & efficiency of lymphocytes.
- Neuropeptides, are produced and received by both the brain and immune system. Therefore, changes in emotion can influence the immune system.

Common Sources of Stress

- Major life changes
- Daily hassles
- College stressors
- Job-related stressors
- Interpersonal and social interactions

Tools for Managing Stress

- Social support
- Regular exercise
- Good nutrition
- Time-management skills
- Clear communication
- Relaxation techniques

Time-Management Strategies

- Set priorities and realistic goals
- Budget enough time
- Create short-term goals
- Visualize achievement
- Do least favorite tasks first
- Consolidate tasks and delegate responsibility
- Learn to say no
- Give yourself a break
- Just do it

Cognitive Strategies

- Modify expectations
- Monitor self-talk
- Live in the present
- Be flexible
- Laugh!

Relaxation Techniques

- Relaxation techniques can trigger the relaxation response:
  - A physiological state characterized by a feeling of warmth and quiet mental alertness
  - Trigger the relaxation response through
    - progressive relaxation
    - visualization
    - deep breathing