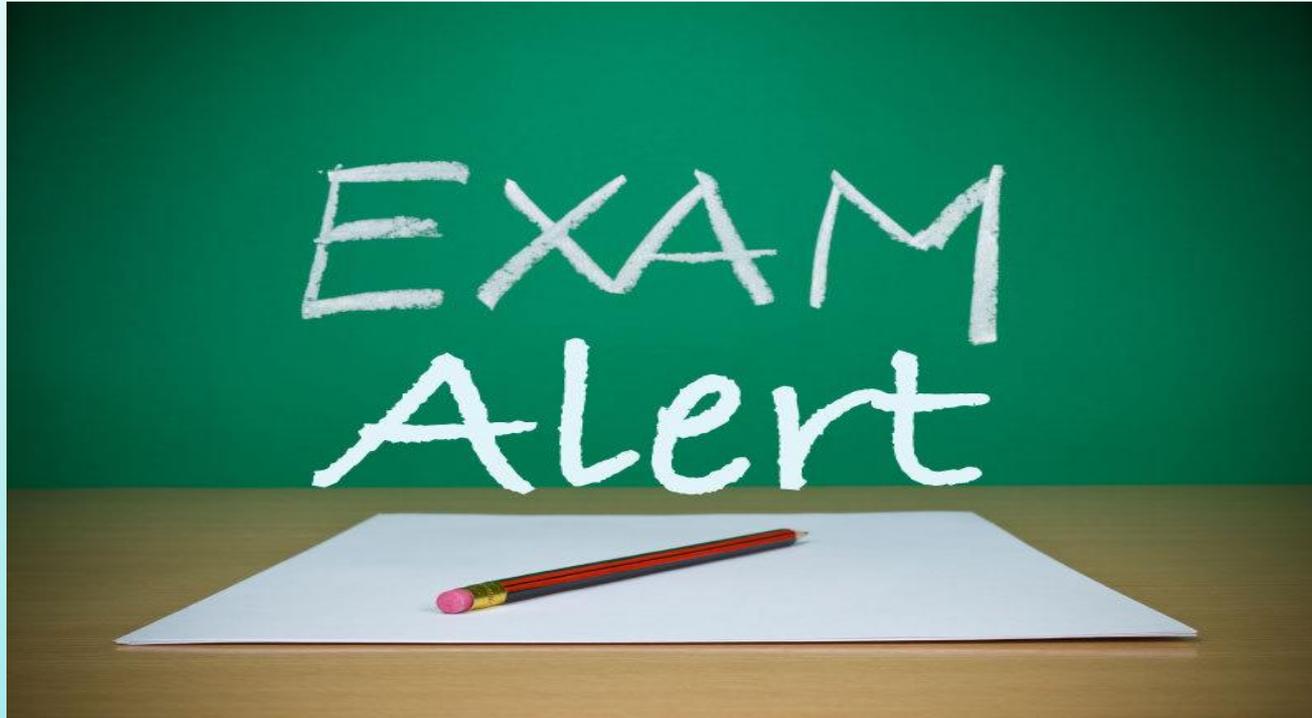


# MANAGING EXAM STRESS



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# TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

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- What are exams for?
- What are the signs of stress?
- What is happening in the brain?
- Some study tips.
- Some support strategies.
- Stress reducing foods.

# Purpose of exams

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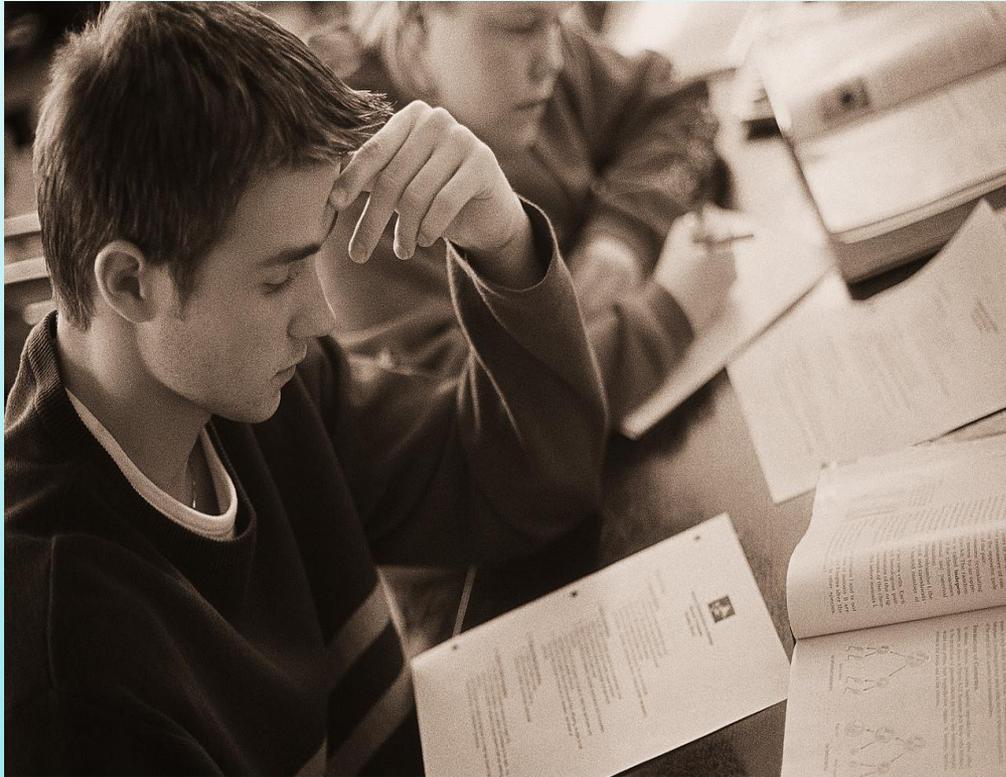
For students:

- Apply your knowledge, consolidate learning
- Self reflection

For teachers:

- Feedback (on learning process)

# STRESS REACTIONS



# PHYSICAL REACTIONS

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- Illnesses - cold, 'flu, infections
- Aches & pains
- Stomach upsets
- Skin breakouts & allergies
- Palpitations
- Breathing difficulties
- Every organ system imaginable

# EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

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- Mood swings
- Extreme reactions to small upsets
- Flat, unemotional
- Inappropriate emotions
- Irritability
- Depression, sadness, tearfulness
- Fearfulness

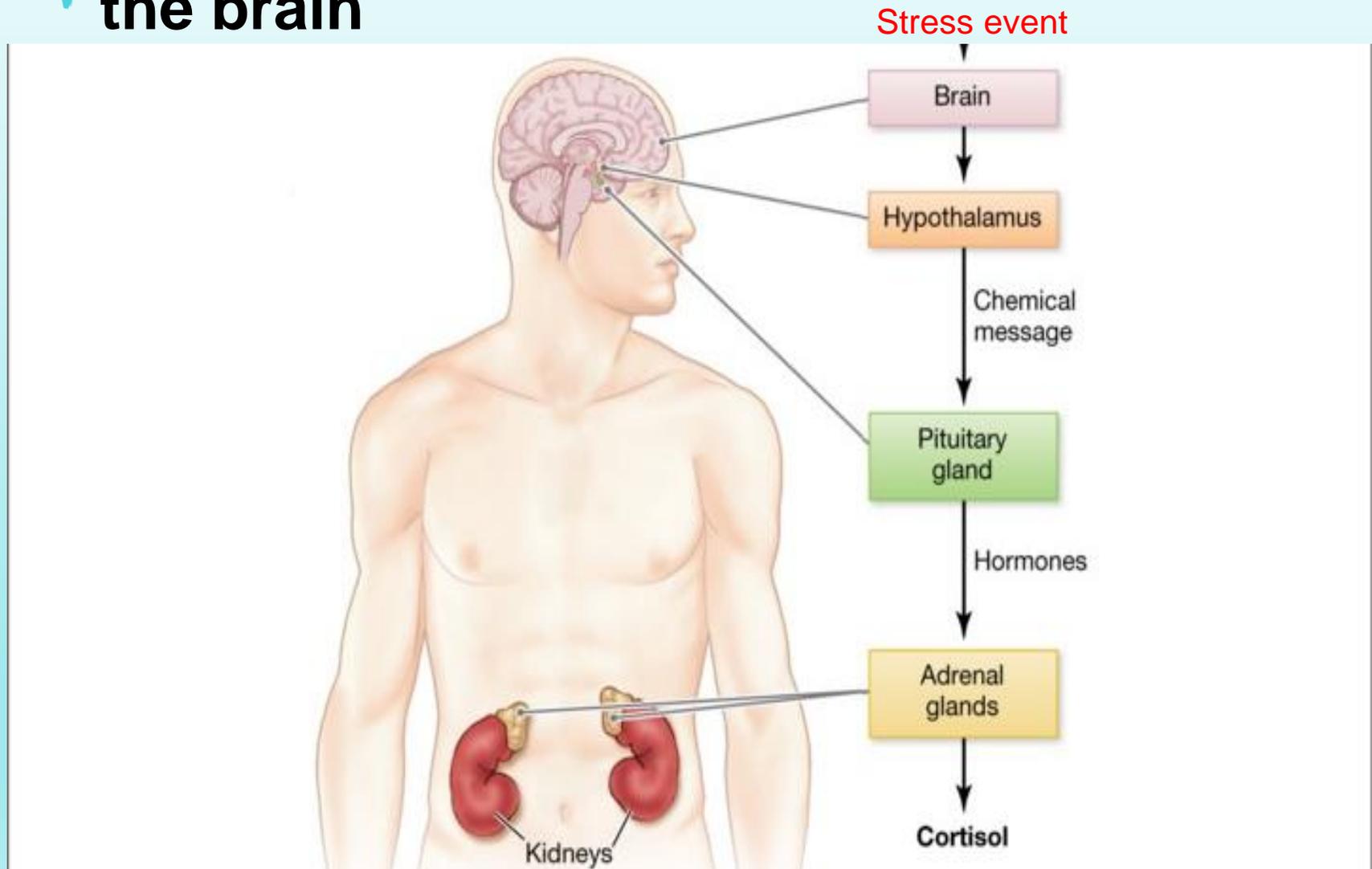
# COGNITIVE/MENTAL REACTIONS

- Poor attention & concentration
- Poor memory
- Paucity of ideas
- Racing ideas or thoughts
- Poor creativity
- Poor problem-solving

# OTHER REACTIONS

- Sleep difficulties
- Eating patterns
- Withdrawal
- Inability to be alone
- Problems in relationships
- Gender differences
  - male: fight or flight
  - female: tend & befriend

# Understanding stress: What is happening in the brain



# What does it mean to be a supportive parent?

- **Maintain an atmosphere of respect and tolerance**
- **Selfcare (physical & mental well being)**
- **Be there for them to turn to when they need help and support**
- **Avoid nagging, being critical or “picky” (Non Verbal – eye rolling, throwing hands in the air or huffing & puffing)**

# Parenting 101

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**Things that work and things that don't.**

# THINGS THAT DON'T WORK

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- Bravado approach (trying to do everything for your child)
- Using excuses like “I’m too busy” or “I know nothing about the subject”
- Nagging

# THINGS THAT DO WORK

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- Self organisation (prioritise what is important)
- Keep things in proportion (family & personal balance)
- Be natural (don't try to be perfect, take a moment prior to making decisions)
- Know your personal stress signs
- Food, sleep, relaxation, teamwork

# Study tips that assist students

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- Help them with their organisation (schedule)
- Support them with an effective emotional structure (calmness, motivation)
- Environment (place to study, remove distractions)
- Activate support (via friends, family, teachers)
- Identify the learning style that works

# Schedule planner

Schedule planner for .....

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7-8						AM	AM
8-9	<h1>DCIS</h1>					Sleep	Family
9-10						Sleep	Family
10-11						Sleep	Family
11-12						Maths	CoScience
12-1							English
1-2							
2-3							
3-4						ECA	Relax
4-5	Relax	Piano	Fitness	Piano	Social	English	Music
5-6	Maths	English	Maths	CoScience	Chinese	CoScience	Outing
6-7	CoScience	History	CoScience	History	English	Piano	Outing
7-8	Family	Family	Family	Family	Family	Relax	History
8-9	Chinese	Maths	Chinese	English	Music		
9-10	English	CoScience	Music	Maths	CoScience	EVENING	EVENING
						Family	Family
						Social	Maths
						Social	Chinese



Study



Social



Family



Personal



ECA's

# SUPPORTING YOUR SON/DAUGHTER

- Home:
  - Study room
  - Family aware, household rules
  - Modify expectations (eg. time for study, jobs to do, computer access)

# Supporting your child

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- Parents:
  - Take an interest (check schedule)
  - Encourage (trust, belief, be realistic)
  - Assist without control (suggest some different revision techniques, others involved in revision, offer to “test”)

# Supporting your child

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## Parents:

- Keep the balance (eating, exercise, sleep, work, personal time, friends, family + act as a human barometer)
- Be observant
- Open the communication line
- Be a “constructive nagger”
- Keep things in perspective

# FOOD: Stress management diet

- Serotonin is a calming brain chemical
- Reduce cortisol & adrenaline stress hormone levels
- Comfort foods (eg.warm oatmeal) boost serotonin
- Carbs (eg whole grain cereals, pasta) prompt the brain to make more serotonin
- Reduce simple sugars (eg soda) as they spike the level of serotonin but only short term.
- Foods that curb stress hormones: spinach, salmon, tuna, black tea, walnuts, almonds, avocados, raw vegetables.

# Exam tips:

- Plan ahead (time, place of exam, equipment needed)
- Eat well, keep the routine
- Discuss exam strategies with your child :
  - relax at the start
  - read directions
  - plan your time (include “breaks”)
  - answering questions (order, what if you’re stuck)
- **GOOD LUCK** (I’m proud of you!)

# Review and celebrate

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- How did you go? How do you feel?
- What questions did you feel good about?
- Any areas you found difficult?
- How was your revision for this exam?  
(Was it effective?)
- What would you do differently?
- Note the feedback
  
- **WELL DONE + CELEBRATE**

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**THANK YOU!**

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