

# Health and stress

(week 9)

## Stress with physical activity and healthy eating I

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# Outlines and Objectives

## Outlines:

- Physical activity and healthy eating
- The impact of physical activity on stress
- Research data
- Physical inactivity
- Summary

## Objectives:

- Evaluation the impact of Physical activity .
- Can physical activity reduce stress?
- Evaluate the impact of physical inactivity
- Compare between healthy behaviors and copying mechanisms?

# Physical activity and healthy eating

- Physical activity and healthy eating seem to be **protective** against experiencing stress and negative affect as well as **increase positive affect**.
- Previous studies showed that people reduce **salutogenic behaviours** such as physical activity and healthy eating in the face of stress and negative affect **while increasing such behaviours in the context of positive affect**.
- Because of the daily fluctuations of these behaviours, studies examined these relationships in daily life using **ecological momentary assessment (EMA)**

# The impact of physical activity on stress:

- Physical activity can reduce stress as well as negative emotions and can enhance positive emotions.
- People tend to eat **less healthy food** during stressful times, and healthy eating can increase general health.
- Physical activity and healthy eating have been mostly assessed separately and through **retrospective methods**.

# Research data

- Feeling stressed is a growing phenomenon of modern society (Hapke *et al.*, 2013) and has become a primary health concern, especially in the **population of students** (Beiter *et al.*).
- It is associated with **health-related problems** such as gastrointestinal, endocrine, and cardiovascular disease, as well as **mental disorders** like **anxiety and depression** (Abbott, & Ball, 2013).
- Due to negative consequences, identifying potential salutogenic behaviours such as **physical activity and healthy eating** for the **stress–health relationship** is important for a healthy life.

# Physical inactivity

- Can contribute to serious **physiological** and **psychological** problems such as:
- increased risk for obesity, metabolic syndrome, cancer, cardiovascular problems, and worse body satisfaction and self-esteem.
- In contrast, even a medium amount of daily physical activity can help to **prevent** as well as **improve** general physical and mental well-being, including **stress level**.

# Summary

- Previous studies have shown that both physical activity and stress **mutually influence each other**.
- During stressful periods, people tend to engage in activities that are less exhausting and avoid exercise probably due to a **lack of time and self-regulatory resources**.
- Stress prospectively predicts a decrease in physical activity.
- Instead of using physical activity to deal with stress, people often use **unhealthy behaviours** as an expression of emotion-focused coping, **including smoking, overeating, drinking, and a lack of exercise**.

# Reference

- Bidirectional relationship of stress and affect (sensation or felling) with physical activity and healthy eating.
- Dana Schultchen<sup>1,a\*</sup> , Julia Reichenberger<sup>2,3,a\*</sup> , Theresa Mittl<sup>1</sup> Tabea R. M. Weh<sup>1</sup>, Joshua M. Smyth<sup>4</sup> , Jens Blechert<sup>2,3</sup> and Olga Pollato.
- British Journal of Health Psychology (2019), 24, 315–333