



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



# Stress in America Findings

RELEASED NOVEMBER 9, 2010 • Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist



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# METHODOLOGY

The Stress in America Survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of the American Psychological Association between August 3 and 27, 2010, among 1,134 adults aged 18+ who reside in the U.S., including 100 adults who are parents of children aged 8 – 17. In addition to the national sample, an oversample of 937 adults who are parents of children aged 8 – 17 also were interviewed, for a total of 1,037 parents. This report also includes the results of a YouthQuery survey conducted online between August 18 and 24, 2010, among 1,136 young people aged 8 – 17 years old. In this report, children aged 8 – 12 are considered tweens and teens are defined as children 13 – 17.\*

When answering questions about their children, if a parent had more than one child, they were instructed to think only about the child whose birthday was most recent. Children were instructed to answer questions about the adult they live with most of the time. Parents and children interviewed for the survey were not matched pairs.

Body Mass Index (BMI) in this report was calculated by using self-reported weight and height. The BMI categories are defined as the following: underweight (less than 18.5), normal weight (18.5 – 24.9), overweight (25 – 29.9) and obese (30+).

The four generations noted in this report are defined as the following: Millennials (19 – 31 year-olds), Generation X (32 – 45 year-olds), Boomers (46 – 64 year-olds) and Matures (65 years and older).

Results were weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income among the entire population. For each of the city reports, results were weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region

\* Throughout the report, data from the 2010 survey are compared to data from previous studies conducted in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

# METHODOLOGY (CONTINUED)

and household income within the specific Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSAs) for each city as designated by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Propensity score weighting also was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

MSAs are a formal definition of metropolitan areas produced by OMB. These geographic areas are delineated on the basis of central urbanized areas — contiguous counties of relatively high population density. Counties containing the core urbanized area are known as the central counties of the MSA. Additional surrounding counties (known as outlying counties) can be included in the MSA if these counties have strong social and economic ties to the central counties as measured by commuting and employment. Note that some areas within these outlying counties may actually be rural in nature. For the 2010 Stress in America Study an oversample was collected of the following MSAs: Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Seattle and Washington, DC.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error, which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted random samples with 100 percent response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the U.S. population aged 18+. Because the sample is based on those who were invited and agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive online research panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## KEY FINDINGS

As the U.S. economy continues to struggle for the third year, findings from the 2010 Stress in America survey paint a picture of an overstressed nation. Feeling the effects of prolonged financial and other recession-related difficulties, Americans are struggling to balance work and home life and make time to engage in healthy behaviors, with stress not only taking a toll on their personal physical health, but also affecting the emotional and physical well-being of their families.

Children and adults alike who are obese or overweight are more likely to feel stress, and overweight children are more likely to report that their parents were often or always stressed over the past month. Children, regardless of weight or age, say they can tell that their parents are stressed when they argue and complain, which many children say makes them feel sad and worried. Parents, however, are not fully realizing the impact their own stress is having on their children.

In general, Americans recognize that their stress levels remain high and exceed what they consider to be healthy. Adults seem to understand the importance of healthy behaviors like managing their stress levels, eating right, getting enough sleep and exercise, but they report experiencing challenges practicing these healthy behaviors. They report being too busy as a primary barrier preventing them from better managing their stress, and a lack of motivation, energy and time as the chief reasons for not being more physically active. In 2009 and again this year, lacking willpower was cited as a barrier to adopting healthy behaviors when lifestyle changes were recommended by a health care provider. Yet the majority believes willpower can be learned as well as improved, if they only had more energy and confidence.

The survey found that although reported average stress levels have remained much the same as they were last year, fewer adults report being satisfied with the ways that their employer helps employees balance work and non-work demands and, in general, concern about job stability is on the rise.

Survey findings have consistently shown that the majority of Americans are living with moderate (4 – 7 on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means you have little or no stress and 10 means you have a great deal of stress) or high (8 – 10 on a scale of 1 to 10) levels of stress, and while they understand that this is not healthy, they're stymied in their efforts to make changes.



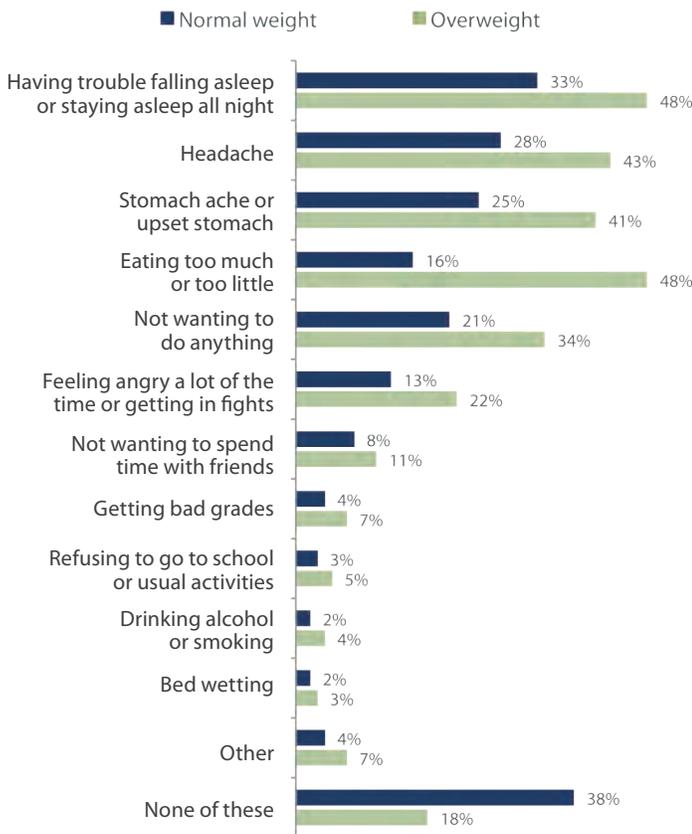
# KEY FINDINGS

Findings suggest that children are aware of the difference between healthy and unhealthy weight.

## Stress Taking a Physical Health Toll on Children

Perhaps most notable are what the survey results suggest about the connection between overweight children and stress. When asked, one-third (31 percent) of American children report being very or slightly overweight, a figure that is in line with nationally reported trends about overweight and obesity.<sup>1</sup> Children who are overweight are more likely to report they worry a lot or a great deal about things in their lives than children who are normal weight (31 percent vs. 14 percent). Overweight children are also significantly more likely than normal-weight children to report they worry about the way they look/their weight (36 percent vs. 11 percent).

### Health Conditions Experienced by Children in the Past Month



Although parents, regardless of their weight, are likely to report they feel it is important for their child to have healthy behaviors, there are findings that suggest that leading by example is also very important. Children who believe they are overweight are significantly more likely than those with a normal weight to report that their parent has been always/often worried or stressed about things in the past month (39 percent vs. 30 percent). While obese parents are equally as likely as those of normal weight to say it's important to them that their children eat healthy foods and stay physically active (77 percent of normal-weight and obese parents), survey results suggest parents who are overweight are less likely to engage in the healthy behaviors they value.

- Parents who are obese are more likely (28 percent) than those of normal weight (16 percent) to report having children who are overweight.

BASE: Youth (n=1136); Underweight (n=169); Normal weight (n=640); Overweight (n=327)  
Q730 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month? Please select all that apply.

<sup>1</sup> Health, United States, 2009. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/09.pdf#073](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/09.pdf#073).

- How often adults eat healthy foods can be related to their child's weight. Parents of overweight children are less likely (14 percent) to report that they (the parents) eat healthy foods very often or almost always than parents of normal-weight children (26 percent report eating healthy foods very often, almost always or always).
- Parents who are normal weight are more likely than those who are obese to say they engage in physical activity with their families (69 percent vs. 53 percent) and do activities together at home on a weekly basis or more often (68 percent vs. 54 percent).

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Parents who are normal weight are more likely than those who are obese to say they engage in physical activity with their families.

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Findings from the survey also suggest a relationship between stress and obesity in children.

- Children who are overweight are more likely to report having trouble falling asleep (48 percent vs. 33 percent), headaches (43 percent vs. 28 percent), eating too much or too little (48 percent vs. 16 percent) or feeling angry and getting into fights (22 percent vs. 13 percent), which are often symptoms of stress.
- Children who believe they are overweight are more likely to report that their parents have been always or often stressed or worried in the past month than children who see themselves as having a normal weight (39 percent vs. 30 percent).
- Children who are normal weight are more likely to report doing healthy things to make themselves feel better when they are worried or stressed, such as playing sports (21 percent vs. 13 percent).
- Children who are overweight are more likely than children of normal weight to report eating



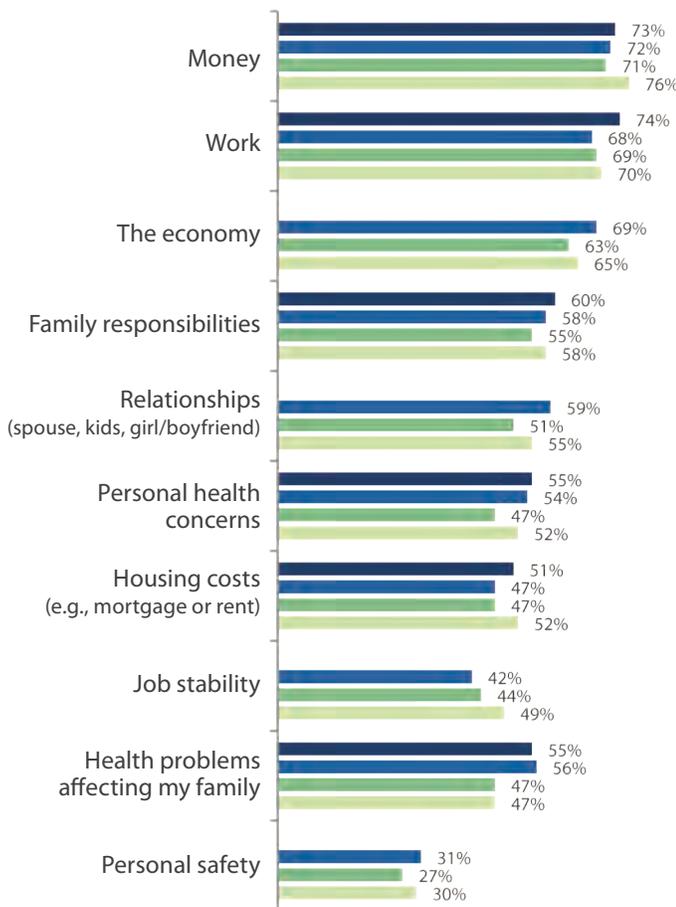
# KEY FINDINGS

Money, work and the economy remain the most oft-cited sources of stress for Americans.

### Causes of Stress

% Somewhat/Very Significant

■ 2007 ■ 2008 ■ 2009 ■ 2010



**BASE:** All respondents 2007 (n=1848); 2008 (n=1791); 2009 (n=1568); 2010 (n=1134)  
**Q625** Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

(27 percent vs. 14 percent) or taking a nap (26 percent vs. 15 percent) to make themselves feel better when they are stressed.

## Stress: Perception and Reality — How It’s Hurting American Families

As the aftershocks of the Great Recession continue to be felt across the country, money (76 percent), work (70 percent) and the economy (65 percent) remain the most oft-cited sources of stress for Americans. Job stability is on the rise as a source of stress; nearly half (49 percent) of adults reported that job stability was a source of stress in 2010 (compared to 44 percent in 2009). At the same time, fewer Americans are satisfied with the ways their employer helps them balance work and non-work demands (36 percent compared to 42 percent in 2009).

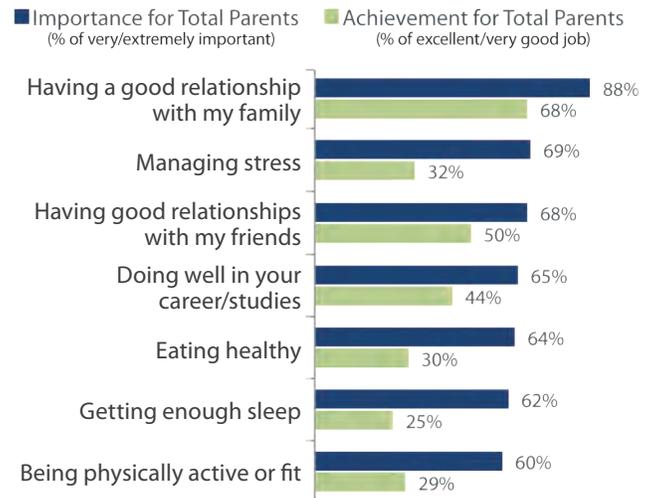
While parents report similar sources of stress as the rest of the population (80 percent cite money, 72 percent cite work and 72 percent cite the economy as stressors), many also report that family responsibilities are a significant source of stress (73 percent). Results from the survey suggest that parents feel that they are under a great deal of stress (nearly one-third report feeling this way) and understand the importance of managing it (69 percent say managing stress is important). However, only one-third (32 percent) believe they are doing an excellent or very good job of managing their stress.

While the majority of parents don’t think their children are strongly affected by their stress, children report otherwise. Nearly three-quarters (69 percent) of parents say that their stress has only a slight or no impact on their children, yet 91 percent of children report they know their parent is stressed because they observe a multitude of behaviors, such as yelling, arguing and complaining. When their

parents are stressed or worried, nearly half of tweens (47 percent) and one-third of teens (33 percent) say that they feel sad; one-third of tweens (36 percent) and 43 percent of teens say that they feel worried; and one-quarter (25 percent) of tweens and 38 percent of teens feel frustrated when their parents are stressed. Children who say their parents are always stressed are more likely to report having a great deal of stress themselves than those who say their parents are never stressed (17 percent vs. 2 percent). Just 14 percent of all youth say that their parent's stress doesn't bother them. Overall, these findings suggest that parents are underestimating their child's awareness of their stress and, therefore, the impact it could be having on their child's emotional well-being.

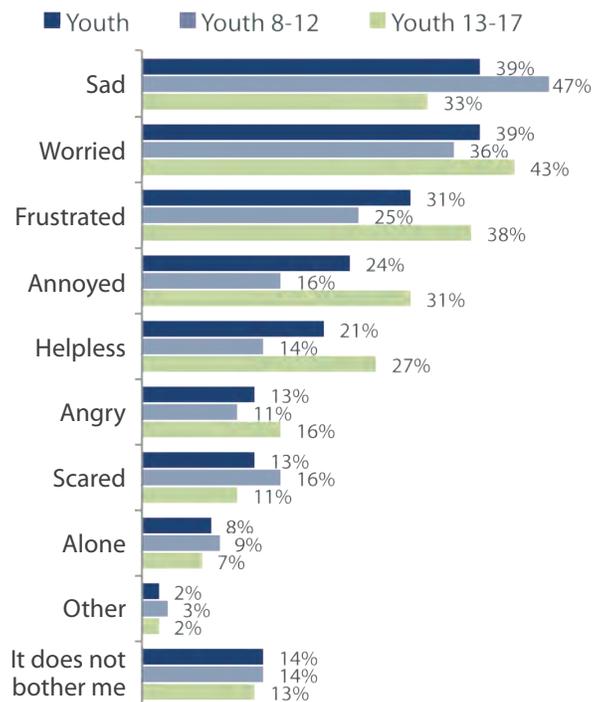
- One-third of children age 8 – 17 believe their parent has been always or often worried or stressed out about things during the past month.
- Four in 10 children say they feel sad when their parent is stressed or worried.
- One-third of children (34 percent) say they know their parent is worried or stressed out when they yell. Other signs of parental stress recognized by children are arguing with other people in the house, complaining or telling children about their problems and being too busy or not having enough time to spend with them.
- One in five children worry a lot or a great deal about things in their lives but very few parents (8 percent) report that their child is experiencing a great deal of stress (8, 9 or 10 on a scale of 1 to 10).
- Nearly a third of children indicated in the past month that they experienced physical health symptoms that are often associated with stress: 38 percent reported trouble falling

## Aspects of Well-Being: Importance vs. Achievement of Parents



BASE: Total Parents (n=1037)  
 Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
 Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?

## How Children Feel When Their Parent is Stressed



BASE: Youth (n=1032); Tweens (n=460); Teens (n=572)  
 Q4016 When your ADULT is stressed or worried how do you feel?



# KEY FINDINGS

Learning early in life to rely on sedentary behaviors to manage stress could have serious implications for the health of young Americans.

asleep or staying asleep at night. Thirty-three percent experienced headaches and 31 percent reported having an upset stomach in the past month.

The vast majority of tweens (86 percent) and teens (74 percent) said that they are very or somewhat comfortable talking to their parents about the things that cause them stress, yet only half (50 percent of tweens and teens) have talked to their parents about things they are worried or stressed about in the past month. On the other hand, 61 percent of parents indicate that they have asked their child about their stress or worry in the past month. The difference in these findings suggest that parents and children may interpret what it means to talk about stress and worry differently, which could have negative implications.

Currently, tweens and teens report that they turn to sedentary behaviors to make themselves feel better when they are really worried or stressed, such as listening to music (36 percent of tweens and 66 percent of teens), playing video games (56 percent of tweens and 41 percent of teens) or watching TV (34 percent of tweens and 30 percent of teens). Learning early in life to rely on sedentary behaviors to manage stress could have serious implications for the health of young Americans, who, according to data reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are already experiencing rampant rates of obesity — nearly one in five young people is obese (19.6 percent of youth ages 6 – 11 and 18.1 percent of youth ages 12 – 19).<sup>2</sup>

### Aspects of Well-Being: Importance vs. Achievement



BASE: All respondents (n=1134)

\* Multiple responses are possible

Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?

Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Childhood Overweight and Obesity. <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/index.html>.

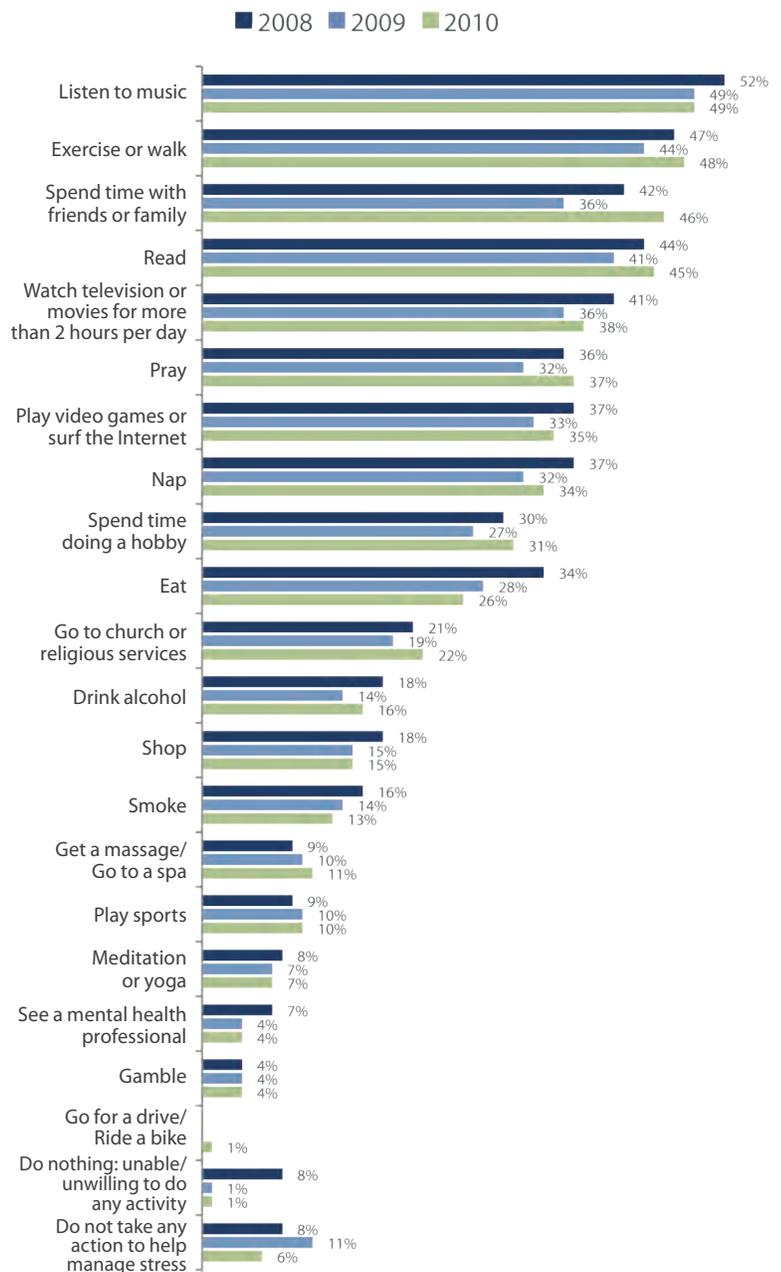
There is also a disconnect between the health behaviors parents and children perceive as important.

- Only 43 percent of young people believe eating right is extremely or very important (versus 78 percent of parents); just 51 percent believe it's important to be fit (versus 78 percent of parents who think it is extremely or very important for their child to be physically active or fit); and only 31 percent think it's important to find activities away from the computer (versus 75 percent of parents).
- More than half of parents (56 percent) say that it takes some or a great amount of effort to get their families to eat healthy foods. Similarly, 54 percent of parents say it takes the same amount of effort to get their families to be physically active.

## Our Bodies, Our Stress

Less than half of all Americans (40 percent) perceive themselves to be in excellent or very good health. A similar number of Americans say their stress levels have increased over the past five years (44 percent). Similar to 2009, however, there continues to be a large gap between the level of stress Americans say they are experiencing (the average reported stress level is 5.4 on a 10-point scale) and what they perceive to be a healthy level (the average reported healthy stress level is 3.7 on a 10-point scale). The most common reason given by adults for not doing more to manage their stress was being too busy or not having enough time.

## Stress Management



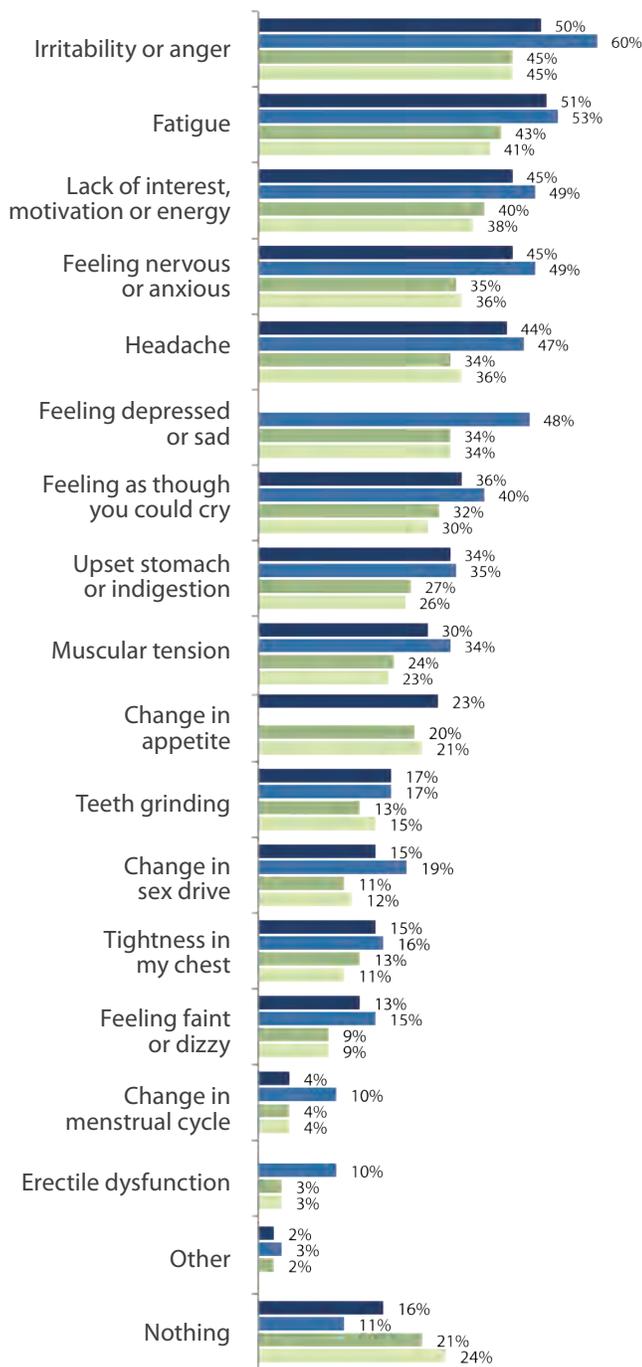
BASE: All respondents 2008 (n=1791); 2009 (n=1568); 2010 (n=1134)  
 Q965 Do you do any of the following to help manage stress? Please select all that apply.



# KEY FINDINGS

## Physical Symptoms of Stress

■ 2007 ■ 2008 ■ 2009 ■ 2010



BASE: All respondents 2007 (n=1848); 2008 (n=1791); 2009 (n=1568); 2010 (n=1134)  
Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

Americans also recognize that they are falling short in just about all areas of well-being, from the quality of their relationships with family and friends to getting enough sleep. Though many Americans reported that health care professionals recommended they exercise more (39 percent), lose weight (36 percent) and eat a healthier diet (30 percent), and many agree that these are important behaviors, they also reported a considerable gap between the importance they place upon these activities and their personal track record of achievement. That is, 58 percent agreed eating healthy was extremely or very important but just 31 percent thought they were doing an excellent or very good job in doing so. Likewise, 54 percent agreed that being physically active was extremely or very important, but just 27 percent were happy with their achievement in this area.

Stress has behavioral consequences which in excess could have physical consequences.

- Two-fifths of adults reported overeating or eating unhealthy foods because of stress in the past month.
- Nearly one-third said they skipped a meal because of stress in the past month.
- More than four in 10 said they had lain awake at night in the past month.
- The most common physical symptoms of stress reported were irritability (45 percent), fatigue (41 percent) and lack of energy or motivation (38 percent).

With the nation currently experiencing epidemic rates of obesity and overweight, it should come as no surprise that nearly one-third of adults exercise less than once per week. Those who exercise once a week or less say they don't do it

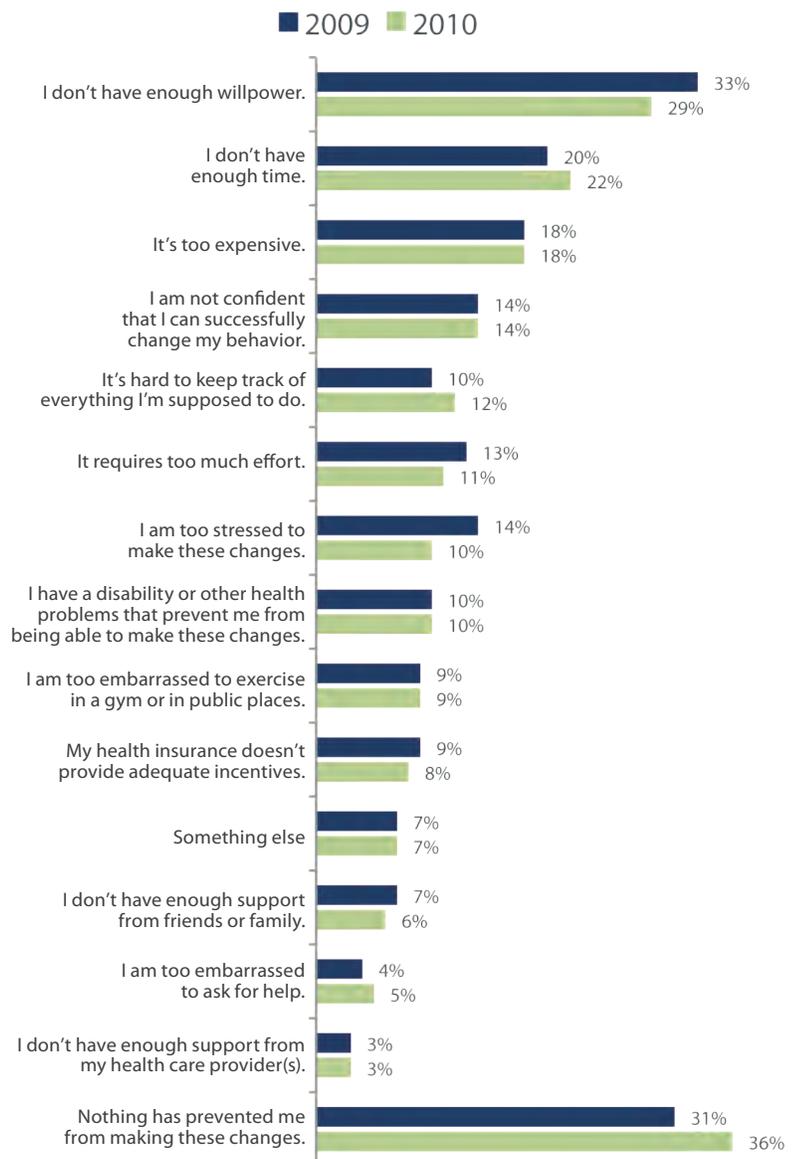
because they are not motivated (44 percent), are too tired (33 percent), are too busy (28 percent) or don't like to (26 percent), among other reasons.

## The Role of Willpower

As they did in 2009, adults again cited a lack of willpower as the most common reason (29 percent) for not following through with recommended lifestyle changes. While the majority of adults (70 percent) believe willpower — defined by respondents as self-control/resisting temptations/urges, sticking to a decision and accomplishing a goal — is something that can be learned, many saw money as an important factor in willpower. Four in 10 adults said money would help them improve their willpower. Similarly, having more energy/less fatigue and more confidence in their ability to change were most commonly cited as what would be needed to overcome a lack of willpower.

While many adults report that they lack willpower, their belief that having more money and more energy would help them accomplish their healthy living goals suggests there is an opportunity to educate adults about effective strategies for adopting healthy behaviors and incorporating these behaviors into their daily lives.

## Barriers to Change



BASE: HCP Recommended Changes 2009 (n=1068); 2010 (n=735)

\* Multiple responses are possible

Q2255 Which of the following, if any, have prevented you from making the lifestyle changes your health care provider has recommended? Please select all that apply.





# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

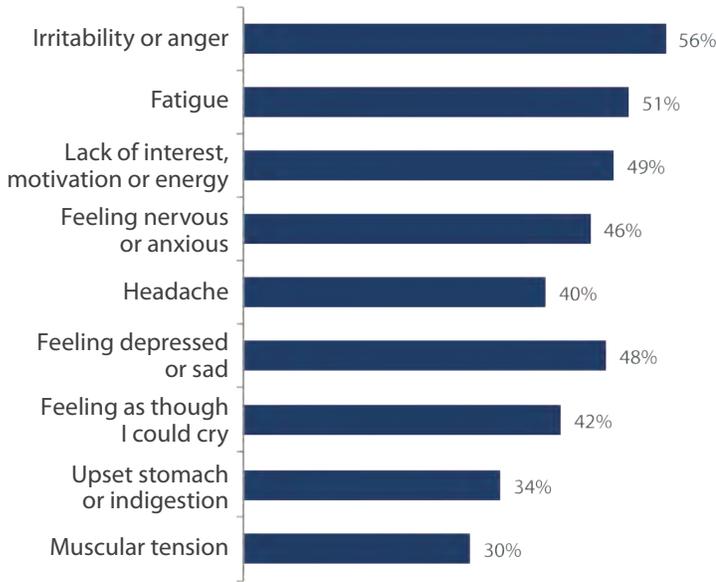
## STRESS AND HEALTH

One in five American adults\* (22 percent) believe themselves to be in fair or poor health, and those adults who rate their health as fair or poor also report higher levels of stress and are more likely to report physical symptoms of stress than those who rate their health as excellent or very good. Similarly, those who rate their health as excellent/very good are more likely to report that healthy behaviors are extremely/very important to them and that they engage in healthy behaviors than those who rate their health as fair or poor. Those who are obese report similar outcomes as those who perceive their health to be fair or poor. Both groups report high levels of stress and high incidences of emotional symptoms of stress.

- On average, those who rate their health as fair/poor have more stress (an average stress rating of 6.2 on a 10-point scale) than those who rate their health as excellent or very good (an average stress rating of 4.9 on a 10-point scale).
- Twenty-nine percent of obese adults report experiencing a great deal of stress (a stress level of 8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale) in the past month compared with 20 percent of normal weight adults.
- Adults who rate their health as fair/poor are nearly twice as likely as those who report their health as excellent/very good to cite their personal health as a cause of stress (70 percent vs. 38 percent). Obese adults are also far more likely to cite personal health as a cause of stress (65 percent vs. 38 percent for those of normal weight).
- Adults who rate their health as fair/poor are far more likely than those who rate their health as excellent/very good to report emotional and physical symptoms of stress, such as irritability or anger (56 percent vs. 39 percent); fatigue (51 percent vs. 31 percent); lack of interest, motivation or energy (49 percent vs. 27 percent); headaches (40 percent vs. 29 percent); and feelings of depression or sadness (48 percent vs. 24 percent).
- Those who are obese are more likely than those of normal weight to report emotional symptoms of stress, such as irritability or anger (50 percent vs. 43 percent); fatigue (44 percent vs. 37 percent); lack of interest, motivation or energy (48 percent vs. 34 percent); and feelings of depression or sadness (39 percent vs. 34 percent).

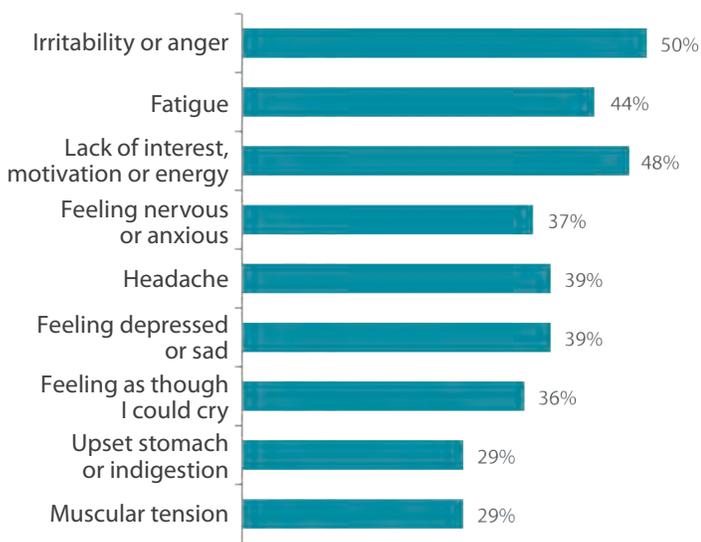


## Physical Symptoms of Stress for Adults with a Fair/Poor Health Rating



**BASE: Fair/Poor (n=280)**  
**Q810** Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

## Physical Symptoms of Stress for Obese Adults



**BASE: Obese (n=374)**  
**Q810** Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

- Adults who rate their health as very good/excellent are significantly more likely than those who rate their health as fair/poor to report that getting enough sleep (77 percent vs. 57 percent), eating healthy (70 percent vs. 48 percent), being physically fit or active (74 percent vs. 35 percent), and managing stress (70 percent vs. 56 percent) are extremely/very important to them.

- In all areas, adults who rate their health as very good/excellent are significantly more likely than those who rate their health as fair/poor to report being successful in their efforts to get enough sleep (43 percent vs. 15 percent), eat healthy (51 percent vs. 16 percent), be physically fit or active (50 percent vs. 7 percent), and manage stress (49 percent vs. 17 percent).

- Findings suggest there may be a connection between an individual's perceived health rating and how successful they feel they are at having good relationships with family and friends. Only 44 percent of those who report being in fair/poor health say they are successful in having good relationships with their family (compared with 79 percent of those who report being in excellent/good health), and only 38 percent say they are successful in having good relationships with their friends (compared with 69 percent). Similarly, perceived health appears to be related to a person's ability to succeed in his or her career or studies. Twenty-five percent of those who report being in fair/poor health say they are successful in this area compared with 62 percent of those who report being in excellent/very good health.

- Obese adults are highly likely to report poor eating habits as a result of their stress. More than half (51 percent) say they have eaten too much or have eaten

unhealthy foods because of stress, and one-third (33 percent) say they eat to manage stress.

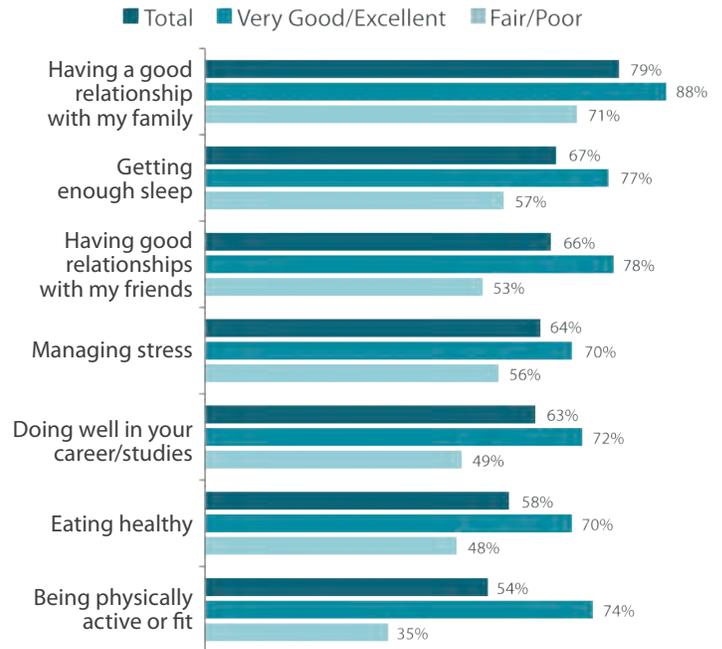
- Adults who rate their health as fair/poor are more likely than those who rate their health as excellent/good to have been told by a health care provider to reduce their stress levels (35 percent vs. 12 percent of those who said they were in excellent/very good health). Similarly, obese adults are twice as likely as normal-weight adults to have been told by a health care provider to reduce their stress levels (26 percent vs. 13 percent).
- Those who report that they are in excellent/very good health are nearly twice as likely to exercise or walk to relieve their stress than those who report that they are in fair/poor health (60 percent vs. 31 percent).
- Those who report that they are in fair/poor health are more likely to choose sedentary activities such as playing video games (47 percent vs. 29 percent) or napping (46 percent vs. 29 percent) to relieve stress than those who report they are in excellent/good health.

## Willpower Standing in the Way of Good Health

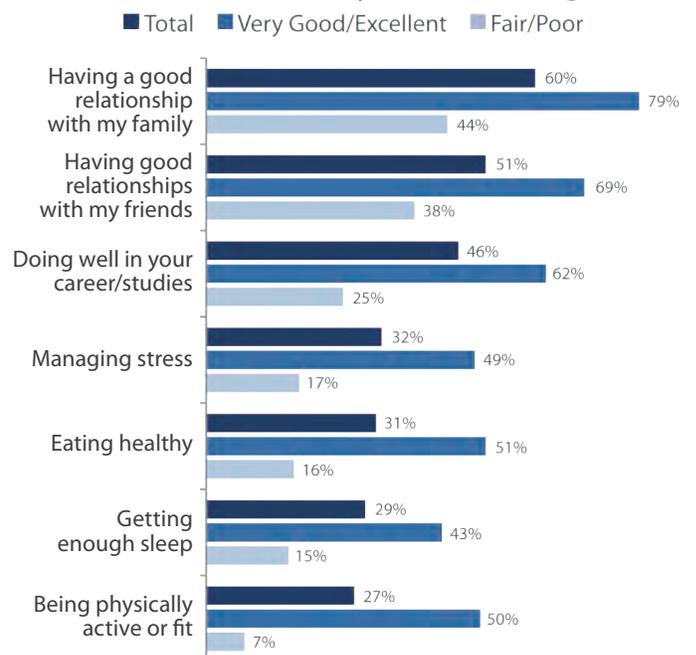
While many Americans cite lack of willpower as a major barrier preventing them from making the lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by a health care provider, many more obese adults cite lack of willpower as a barrier than adults of normal weight.

- Obese adults are much more likely to say that lack of willpower prevents them from making the lifestyle changes recommended by their health care provider. Four in 10 (42 percent) obese adults cite a lack of willpower as the biggest reason they fail to make

### Importance, by Health Rating



### Achievement, by Health Rating



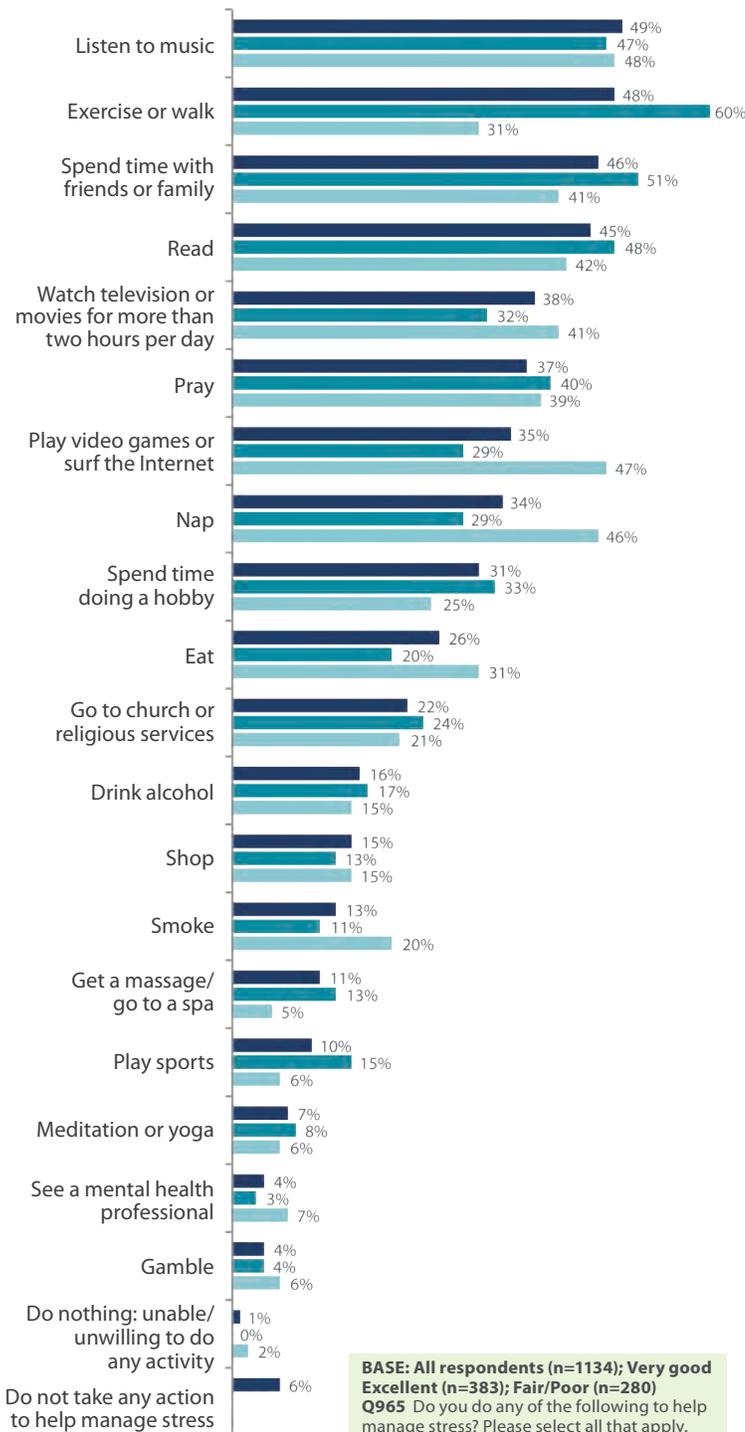
BASE: All respondents (n=1134); Very good Excellent (n=383); Fair/Poor (n=280)  
Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?



# STRESS AND HEALTH

## Stress Management, by Health Rating

■ Total ■ Very Good/Excellent ■ Fair/Poor



changes recommended by a health care provider (compared to 18 percent of people with normal weight).

- Those who rate their health as fair/poor are more than twice as likely (43 percent vs. 20 percent) than those who rate their health as excellent/very good to cite a lack of willpower for not making lifestyle changes recommended by a health care provider.
- When those who reported that they exercise about once a week or less were asked what prevents them from being more physically active, those who also reported being in fair/poor health were significantly more likely than those who reported being in excellent/very good health to say it is because they are too tired (46 percent vs. 17 percent), they are too self conscious or embarrassed (13 percent vs. 5 percent), or they don't know how to get started (10 percent vs. 2 percent).
- When those who indicated that a lack of willpower prevented them from making changes their health care provider recommended were asked what would need to change for their willpower to improve, obese adults were most likely to say feeling better about themselves (56 percent) or caring more for their health (54 percent). Having more energy (51 percent) and more confidence (51 percent) were the top responses for the general population.
- Those who are obese were also more likely than those of normal weight to say they lacked the confidence to make lifestyle changes their health care provider recommended (25 percent vs. 6 percent) or were too embarrassed to exercise in a public place (14 percent vs. 1 percent).



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS AND GENDER

Men and women\* report different reactions to stress, both physically and mentally. They attempt to manage stress in very different ways and also perceive their ability to do so — and the things that stand in their way — in markedly different ways. Findings suggest that while women are more likely to report physical symptoms associated with stress, they are doing a better job connecting with others in their lives and, at times, these connections are important to their stress management strategies.

### Stress on the Rise for Women

Though they report similar average stress levels, women are more likely than men to report that their stress levels are on the rise. They are also much more likely than men to report physical and emotional symptoms of stress. When comparing women with each other, there also appears to be differences in the ways that married and single women experience stress.

- Women are more likely than men (28 percent vs. 20 percent) to report having a great deal of stress (8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale).
- Almost half of all women (49 percent) surveyed said their stress has increased over the past five years, compared to four in 10 (39 percent) men.
- Women are more likely to report that money (79 percent compared with 73 percent of men) and the economy (68 percent compared with 61 percent of men) are sources of stress while men are far more likely to cite that work is a source of stress (76 percent compared with 65 percent of women).
- Women are more likely to report physical and emotional symptoms of stress than men, such as having had a headache (41 percent vs. 30 percent), having felt as though they could cry (44 percent vs. 15 percent), or having had an upset stomach or indigestion (32 percent vs. 21 percent) in the past month.
- Married women report higher levels of stress than single women, with one-third (33 percent) reporting that they have experienced a great deal of stress in the past month (8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale) compared with one in five (22 percent) of single women. Similarly, significantly more married women report that their stress has increased over

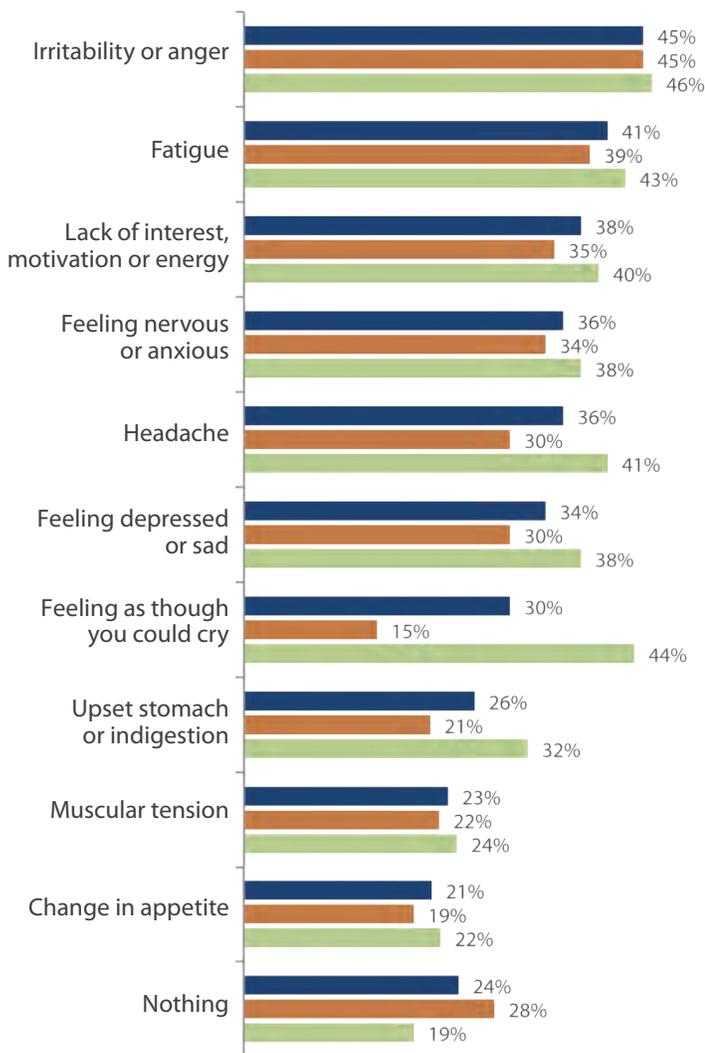


# STRESS AND GENDER

Married women report higher levels of stress than single women.

## Physical Symptoms of Stress of Men and Women

■ Total ■ Male ■ Female



BASE: All respondents (n=1134); Male (n=530); Female (n=604)  
Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

the past five years (56 percent vs. 41 percent of single women). Single women are also more likely than married women to say they feel they are doing enough to manage their stress (63 percent vs. 51 percent).

- Married women are more likely than single women to report they have experienced the following due to stress in the past month: feeling as though they could cry (54 percent vs. 33 percent), feeling irritable or angry (52 percent vs. 38 percent), having headaches (48 percent vs. 33 percent) and experiencing fatigue (47 percent vs. 35 percent).

Men and women report wide gaps between determining what is important and how successful they are at achieving those behaviors.

- Women are much more likely than men to say that having a good relationship with their families is important to them (84 percent vs. 74 percent). While fewer women say they are doing a good job at succeeding in this area, they outpace men (67 percent vs. 53 percent).
- Women are also more likely than men to say that having a good relationship with their friends is important to them (69 percent vs. 62 percent), even though friendship is cited less often than family for both men and women.
- Even though nearly half of all women (49 percent) say they have lain awake at night in the past month because of stress, three-quarters of women rate getting enough sleep as extremely or very important (75 percent compared with 58 percent of men).
- Across the board, men's and women's perceptions of their ability to succeed in areas that are important to their well-being are far out of line with the importance they

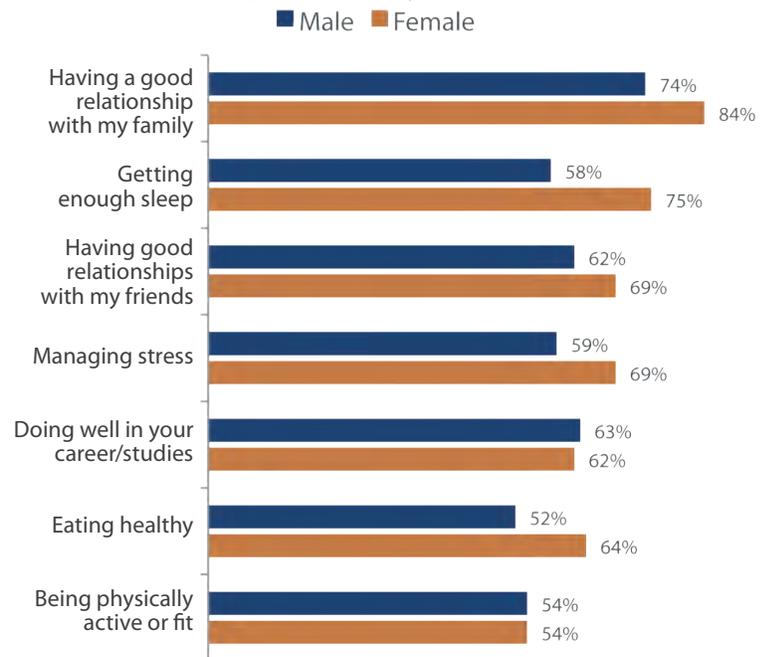
place on these behaviors. Even more so than women, men report less likelihood of success in these areas.

- Only 33 percent of women report being successful in their efforts to get enough sleep (compared with 75 percent who believe this is important); only 35 percent report success in their efforts to manage stress (compared with 69 percent who believe this is important); 36 percent report success in their efforts to eat healthy (compared with 64 percent who believe this is important); and only 29 percent are successful in their efforts to be physically active (compared with 54 percent who believe this is important).
- Only 25 percent of men report being successful in their efforts to get enough sleep (compared with 58 percent who believe this is important); only 30 percent report success in their efforts to manage stress (compared with 59 percent who believe this is important); only 25 percent report success in their efforts to eat healthy (compared with 52 percent who believe this is important); and only 26 percent are successful in their efforts to be physically active (compared with 54 percent who believe this is important).

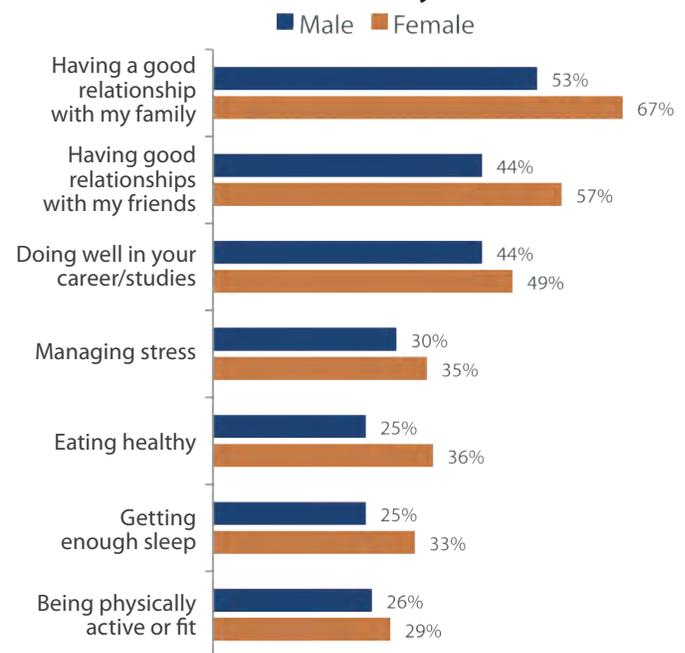
## Strategies for Managing Stress

Regardless of their sources of stress and the physical and emotional symptoms of stress that men and women report, both groups say they manage their stress in very different ways. In general, though, both men and women tend to choose sedentary activities like reading, listening to music and watching television to manage their stress over healthier behaviors like seeing a mental health professional or exercising.

### Importance by Gender



### Achievement by Gender



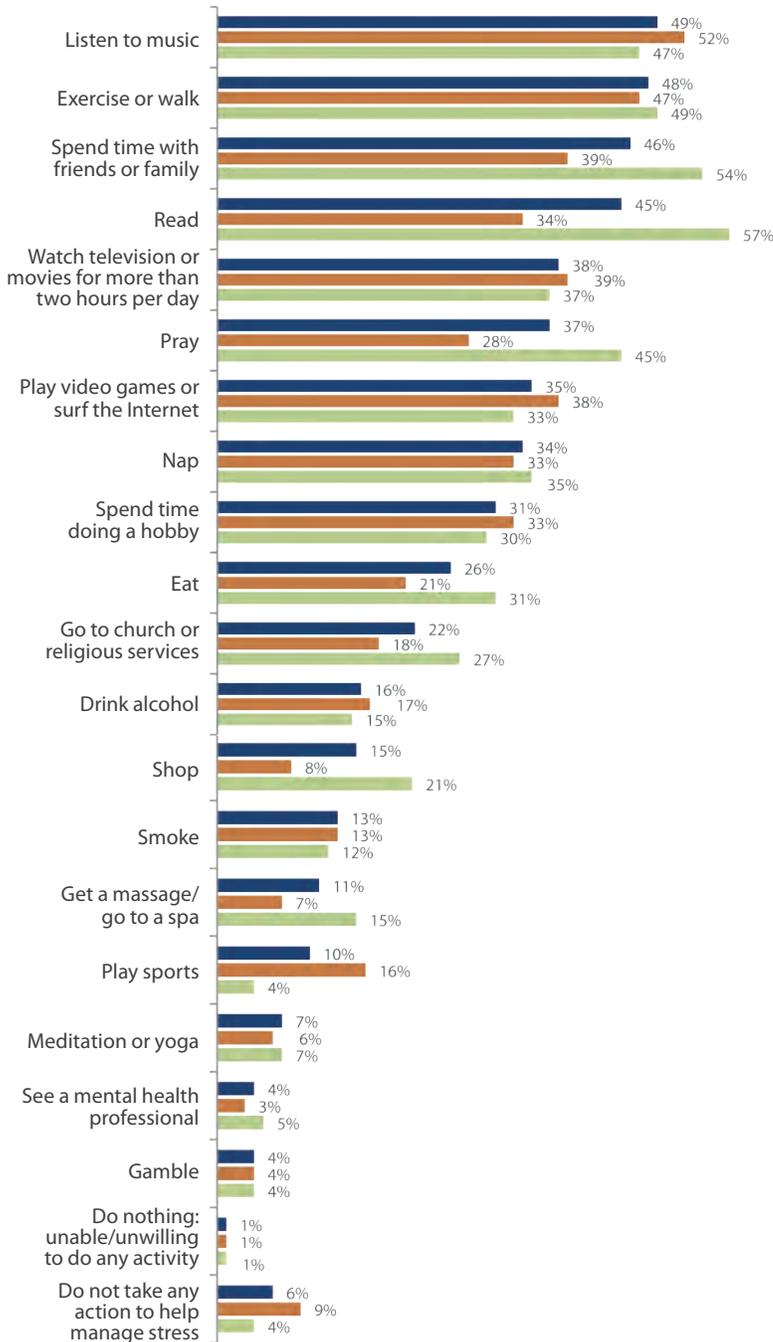
BASE: Male (n=530); Female (n=604)  
 Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
 Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?



# STRESS AND GENDER

## Stress Management

■ Total ■ Male ■ Female



BASE: All respondents (n=1134); Male (n=530); Female (n=604)  
Q965 Do you do any of the following to help manage stress? Please select all that apply.

- Women are far more likely than men to say they read to manage stress (57 percent vs. 34 percent for men) and overall, tend to report more stress management activities that connect them with other people, like spending time with friends or family (54 percent vs. 39 percent) and going to church or religious services (27 percent vs. 18 percent).
- Men are more likely than women to say they play sports (16 percent vs. 4 percent) and listen to music (52 percent vs. 47 percent) as a way of managing stress. They are also more likely than women to say they do nothing to manage their stress (9 percent vs. 4 percent).
- Women are more likely than men to report that they eat as a way of managing stress (31 percent vs. 21 percent). Similarly, women also report having eaten too much or eaten unhealthy foods because of stress in the past month far more often than men (49 percent of women vs. 30 percent of men).
- Significantly more women (35 percent) than men (24 percent) exercise only once a week or less. When asked why they don't exercise more often, they are more likely than men to say they are just too tired (39 percent vs. 26 percent).
- Men are more likely to say they exercise because it gives them something to do (34 percent vs. 23 percent), keeps them from getting sick (29 percent vs. 18 percent) and is something they are good at (19 percent vs. 11 percent).

The things that men and women say prevent them from taking better care of themselves differ greatly as well.

- While both genders cite lack of willpower as the No. 1 barrier to change, women are more likely than men to cite lack of willpower as a barrier preventing them from making the lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by a health care provider (34 percent vs. 24 percent).
- Women are far more likely than men to say that lack of willpower also has prevented them from changing their eating habits (15 percent vs. 1 percent).
- When asked what they would need to change in order for their willpower to improve, women were more likely than men to say less fatigue/more energy (56 percent vs. 44 percent) and more confidence in their ability to improve their willpower (60 percent vs. 38 percent).
- Men are less likely to say they need encouragement from friends or family in order to improve their willpower (28 percent vs. 42 percent) and slightly more likely to say they need more money (43 percent vs. 39 percent). Women are more likely to say they need more time (37 percent vs. 29 percent).
- Six times as many women as men say that having more help with household chores would allow them to improve their willpower (23 percent vs. 4 percent).

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Women are far more likely than men to say that lack of willpower also has prevented them from changing their eating habits.

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AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS AND GENERATIONS

Americans of all ages\* experience stress and its physical consequences. However, there are marked differences between the generations in terms of how stressed people say they are, as well as the causes, symptoms and methods for managing that stress. Those over the age of 65 report the lowest stress levels and are most likely to say they are managing that stress well, while Gen Xers are most likely to report physical symptoms of stress and are more likely to say they rely on unhealthy behaviors to manage their stress.

One thing all of the generations have in common? Financial concerns. Millennials, Gen Xers and Boomers are more likely to cite money as a significant source of stress than other sources of stress, and for Matures the most commonly cited stressor is the economy.

### Stress Across the Ages

- Matures report an average stress level of 4.4 on a 10-point scale, much lower than the nationally reported average of 5.4, but they feel that a healthy level of stress would be 3.4. Gen Xers report an average stress level of 5.8 but feel that a healthy level of stress would be a 3.8.
- The economy is the most commonly reported significant source of stress for Matures (69 percent of Matures). However, Matures are significantly more likely than the general population to say that their stress has decreased over the past five years (46 percent vs. 25 percent of the general population).
- Matures are more likely to say they are doing enough to manage their stress (70 percent), compared to Millennials (50 percent), Gen Xers (52 percent) and Boomers (53 percent).
- While Gen Xers still report the highest average levels of stress of any generation, trends indicate that they believe they have gotten better at managing their stress — 52 percent of Gen Xers reported that they are doing enough to manage their stress in 2010 compared with 48 percent in 2009 and 45 percent in 2008. During this same time period,



# STRESS AND GENERATIONS

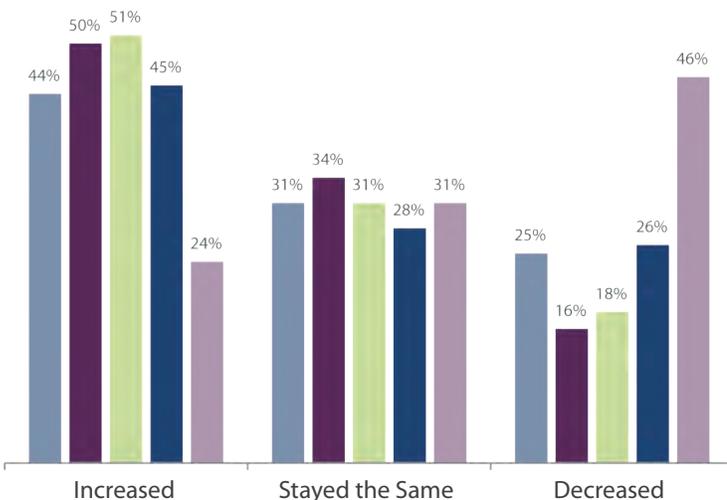
Even though trends showed that Gen Xers reported stress levels are on the decline, they are more likely to report experiencing stress-related physical and emotional symptoms over the past month (in most cases).

trends also show that Gen Xers reported stress levels are on the decline, falling from an average stress level of 6.5 on a 10-point scale in 2008 to a 5.8 in 2010.

- In almost all areas, Gen Xers are more likely to report experiencing the following stress-related physical and emotional symptoms over the past month:
  - More than half (56 percent) of Gen Xers said that they were irritable or angry as a result of stress compared with 30 percent of Matures, 47 percent of Boomers and 43 percent of Millennials.
  - Nearly half (47 percent) of Gen Xers said that they experienced fatigue as a result of stress compared with 34 percent of Matures, 44 percent of Boomers and 37 percent of Millennials.
  - Nearly half (46 percent) of Gen Xers said that they had headaches as a result of stress compared with 22 percent of Matures, 35 percent of Boomers and 36 percent of Millennials.
  - Millennials were most likely to report a change in appetite as a result of stress (27 percent compared with 7 percent of Matures, 21 percent of Boomers, and 22 percent of Gen Xers).

## Stress Over Past Five Years

■ Total ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer ■ Mature



**BASE:** All respondents (n=1134); Millennial (n=268); Gen X (n=293); Boomer (n=396); Mature (n=177)  
**Q620** Thinking about the past five years, would you say the level of stress in your life has increased over time, decreased over time or has it stayed about the same?

## What's Causing Stress?

While money is the most commonly cited cause of stress for all generations, it should come as no surprise that people at each stage of life have differing financial and job-related concerns.

- Millennials (85 percent), Gen Xers (75 percent) and Boomers (76 percent) are more likely than

# STRESS AND GENERATIONS

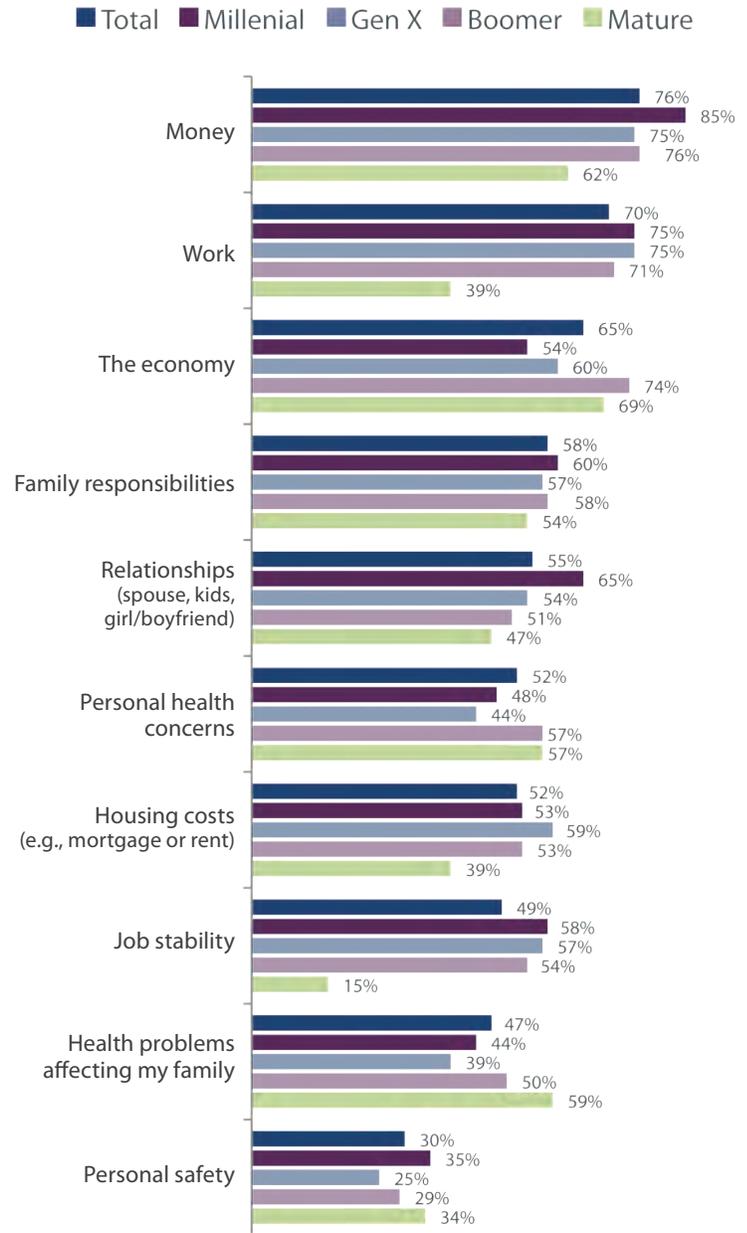
Matures (62 percent) to cite money and job stability as significant causes of stress.

- Gen Xers (59 percent) and Boomers (53 percent) are more likely than Matures (39 percent) to cite housing costs as a source of stress.
- Millennials are increasingly reporting work-related factors as sources of stress. Three-quarters of Millennials cited work as a source of stress in 2010 (compared with 71 percent in 2009 and 66 percent in 2008), and more than half said that job stability was a source of stress this year (58 percent in 2010 and 48 percent in 2009).
- Matures are far more likely than any other group to cite health problems affecting their families as a major source of stress (59 percent compared with 50 percent of Boomers, 39 percent of Gen Xers, and 44 percent of Millennials).

## How the Generations Deal with Stress

Gen Xers are most likely to report unhealthy behaviors — such as lying awake at night (49 percent), overeating/eating unhealthy food (48 percent) or skipping a meal (44 percent) — because of their stress. In addition, younger generations as a whole report unhealthy behaviors to manage stress more often than their older counterparts. Millennials (20 percent) and Gen Xers (23 percent) are significantly more likely than Matures (8 percent) and Boomers (13 percent) to say they drink alcohol to manage stress, and Gen Xers (31 percent) and Millennials (30 percent) are also more likely to report that they eat to manage stress than Matures (18 percent) and Boomers (23 percent).

## Causes of Stress by Generation (% Somewhat/Very Significant)



**BASE:** All respondents (n=1134); Millennial (n=268); Gen X (n=293); Boomer (n=396); Mature (n=177)

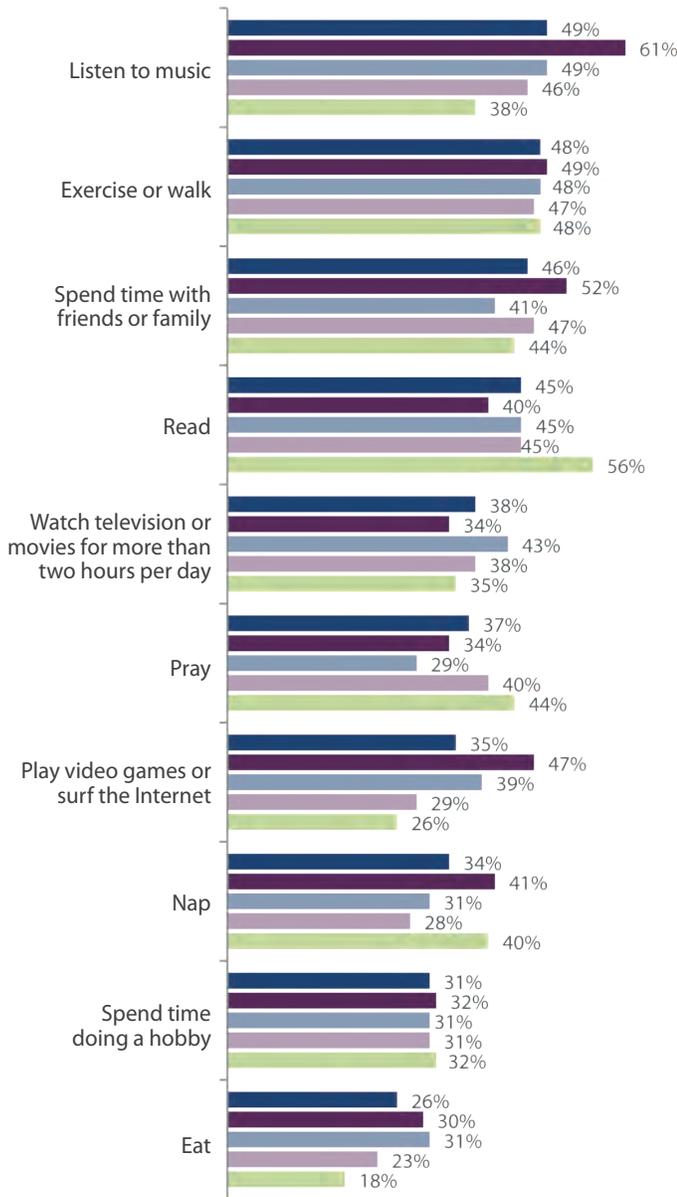
**Q625** Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.



# STRESS AND GENERATIONS

## Stress Management

■ Total ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer ■ Mature



Regardless of age, Americans rate the importance of every aspect of well-being considerably higher than their ability to succeed in these areas. Getting enough sleep, while important to all generations, is an area in which adults report the biggest gaps between the value they place on this behavior and their ability to be successful, but the gap is most dramatic for Gen Xers: six in 10 (61 percent) report that getting enough sleep is extremely/very important, but less than one in five (18 percent) report they are doing a very good/excellent job at getting enough sleep. In general, Matures tend to cite the importance of some key healthy behaviors more often than adults in the younger generations. For example, more Matures (74 percent) say that eating healthy is extremely/very important (compared to 53 percent of Millennials, 50 percent of Gen Xers and 59 percent of Boomers) and Matures (66 percent) are also more likely to say that being physically fit or active is extremely/very important than Gen Xers (50 percent) and Boomers (50 percent).

BASE: All respondents (n=1134); Millennial (n=268); Gen X (n=293); Boomer (n=396); Mature (n=177)  
 Q965 Do you do any of the following to help manage stress? Please select all that apply.



# Stress in America

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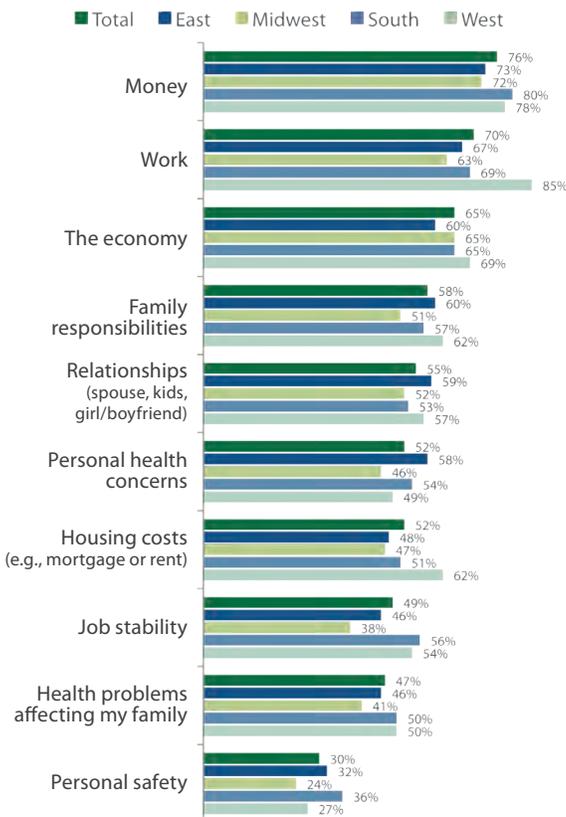
## STRESS AND REGION



Regardless of where they live\*, Americans report experiencing comparable average levels of stress. They also report similarities in the recommendations they receive from health care providers: the most commonly reported lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by a health care provider are to exercise more, lose weight and eat a healthier diet, regardless of where people live. While many people report healthy behaviors are important to them, there tends to be substantial gaps between what they think is important and how successful they believe they are at achieving their goals.

- Housing costs are more frequently cited as a cause of stress among people living in the West (53 percent) and in the South (51 percent) compared with people living in the East (48 percent) and Midwest (47 percent).
- Those who live in the East report the lowest average stress levels, which have steadily declined for four years (6.2 on a 10-point scale in 2007, 5.8 in 2008, 5.5 in 2009 and 5.2 in 2010). Similarly, those living in the East are more likely than those living in other regions to report having little or no stress (35 percent compared to 25 percent in the Midwest, 21 percent in the South and 22 percent in the West).

**Causes of Stress by Region**  
(% Somewhat/Very Significant)



GRAPH AT LEFT

BASE: All respondents (n=1134); East (n=274); Midwest (n=235); South (n=382); West (n=243)  
Q625 Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

\*This section of the report focuses on adults within the general population (2007 n=1,848; 2008 n=1,791; 2009 n=1,568; 2010 n=1,134), by the following regions: East (2007 n=467; 2008 n=448; 2009 n=362; 2010 n=274), Midwest (2007 n=342; 2008 n=355; 2009 n=340; 2010 n=235), South (2007 n=593; 2008 n=575; 2009 n=516; 2010 n=382) and West (2007 n=445; 2008 n=413; 2009 n=349; 2010 n=243). In addition, the general population was examined by urbanicity using the following self-reported categories: urban (n=341), suburban (n=460) and rural (n=333).



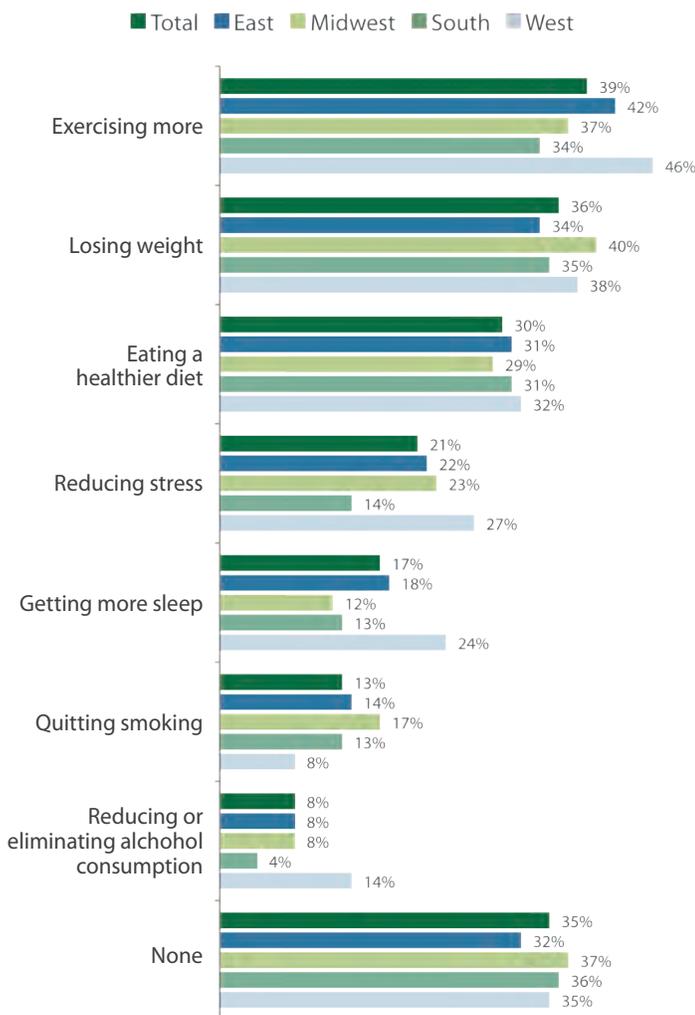
# STRESS BY REGION

Those in the Midwest are less likely than Americans in any other region to report having a “great deal” of stress.

- Those in the Midwest are substantially more likely than those in the West to feel as if they are doing an excellent/very good job at managing their stress (38 percent vs. 24 percent), and they are less likely than Americans in any other region to report having a “great deal” of stress. Just 17 percent say they do, compared to 28 percent of those who live in the East, 27 percent in the Midwest and 25 percent in the South.

- Those living in the Midwest also report declining trends in their average stress levels (6.1 on a 10-point scale in 2007, 6.0 in 2008, 5.6 in 2009 and 5.4 in 2010).

## Recommendations from Health Care Providers



## Living Healthy

- In almost all areas, health care providers have recommended that people make lifestyle and behavior changes, but Westerners report receiving this advice more often than those living in other parts of the country. Westerners have been told to exercise more (46 percent compared with 34 percent in the South, 37 percent in the Midwest and 42 percent in the East), reduce stress (27 percent compared with 14 percent in the South, 23 percent in the Midwest and 22 percent in the East) and get more sleep (24 percent compared with 13 percent in the South, 12 percent in the Midwest and 18 percent in the East ). Smoking is an exception, however: fewer people in the West have been told to quit smoking (8 percent) compared with 13 percent in the South, 17 percent in the Midwest and 14 percent in the East.

- Those living in the West (62 percent) are more likely to report that they exercise several times a week or more than people living in the East (52 percent), the South (54 percent) and the Midwest (55 percent). And those who do are more likely to say that it gives them energy (61 percent) and makes them happy (52 percent).

BASE: All respondents (n=1134); East (n=274); Midwest (n=235); South (n=382); West (n=243)  
Q2110 Which of the following, if any, has a health care provider recommended to you in the past five years? Please select all that apply.

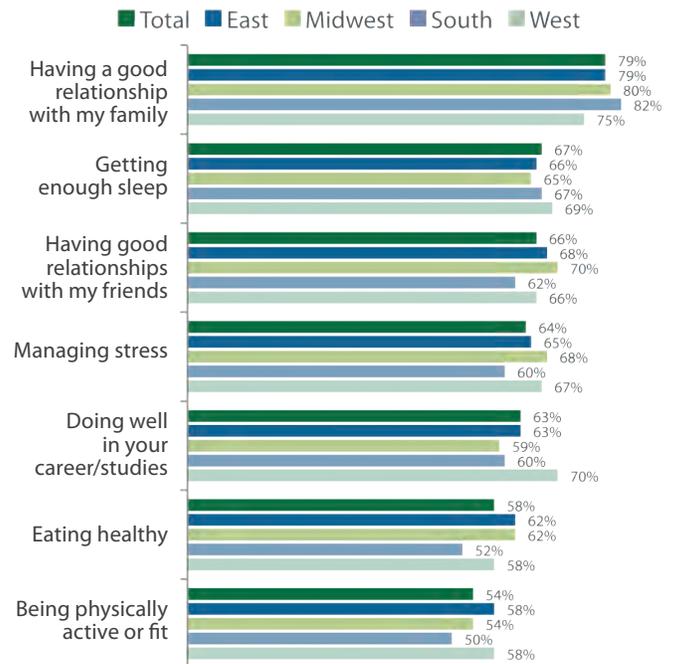
# STRESS BY REGION

- Those in the Midwest are more likely than Americans in other parts of the country to report unhealthy behaviors related to food. More than half (53 percent) say they have eaten too much or eaten unhealthy foods in the past month as a result of stress, compared to 33 percent of those on the East Coast, 37 percent of Southerners and 37 percent of those in the West. Those in the Midwest are also more likely (35 percent) than those in other parts of the country to say they eat to manage their stress (compared with 22 percent in the East, 20 percent in the South and 29 percent in the West).
- Regardless of where they live, Americans place considerably higher importance on every aspect of well-being than their reported success in these areas. Most significant, however, are the differences between the importance people place on getting enough sleep and their ability to do so. In the West, while seven in 10 (69 percent) people say that getting enough sleep is important, they are least likely to say they are successful in their efforts to get enough sleep (22 percent). Sixty-seven percent of people in the South say that getting enough sleep is important, while only 27 percent say they are successful; 65 percent of people in the Midwest say that getting enough sleep is important, while only 38 percent say they are successful; and 66 percent of people in the East say that getting enough sleep is important, while only 29 percent say they are successful.

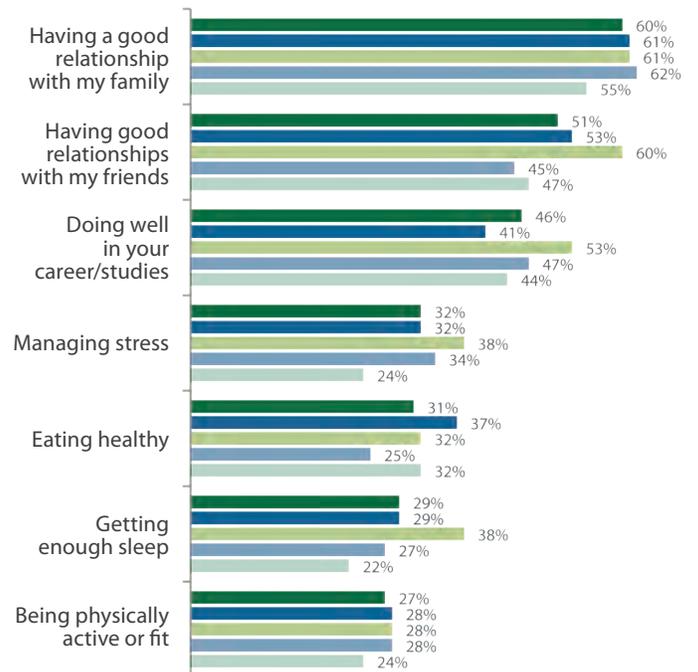
## Stress and Work

- Work is the most commonly cited source of stress among those who live in the West (85 percent) and it appears to be on the rise as a source of stress. In 2009, only 65 percent of Westerners cited work as a source of stress.
- The percentage of people on the East coast reporting feeling stressed during a typical workday dropped to 31 percent in

### Importance, by Region (% Excellent/Very Good)



### Achievement, by Region (% Excellent/Very Good)



BASE: All respondents (n=1134); East (n=274); Midwest (n=235); South (n=382); West (n=243)  
 Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
 Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?



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Seventy-one percent of people living in the East said they were satisfied with their jobs in 2009 compared with just 58 percent this year.

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2010 compared with 42 percent in 2009. Even though the percentage of Americans who report experiencing stress during a typical workday has declined in the East, so have reports of job satisfaction. Seventy-one percent of people living in the East said they were satisfied with their jobs in 2009 compared with just 58 percent this year.

### Urban/Suburban/Rural Differences

Regardless of whether Americans live in the suburbs, an urban area or rural area, they are all experiencing about the same levels of stress. However, those who live in urban areas are less likely to feel they are doing a good job managing it.

- Fewer people in urban settings (44 percent) feel they are doing enough to manage their stress compared to those in the suburbs (59 percent) or rural areas (57 percent).
- One-third (33 percent) of those living in urban areas perceive their health to be fair/poor — far more than those who live in suburban neighborhoods (18 percent) or rural areas (19 percent).
- Money is cited more frequently as a source of stress for those who live in urban (80 percent) and rural areas (80 percent) than it is for those in the suburbs (71 percent).
- People living in urban areas are more likely than those living in rural areas to cite work as a source of stress (78 percent vs. 62 percent).

On the following pages are snapshots of stress and its impact on the health and well-being of residents living in eight major metropolitan areas: Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Seattle and Washington, D.C.



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN ATLANTA



Despite reporting financial-related stress again this year, residents of Atlanta\* report lower stress levels than in recent years. However, the percentage of Atlantans reporting a diagnosis of depression has doubled in the past year. In general, Atlanta residents report more problems with their physical and mental health than last year and are increasingly concerned with the cost of housing.

### Perception of Stress and Its Sources

In 2010, fewer Atlanta residents report having high levels of stress compared to last year, and fewer perceive their stress levels as having increased over the past year. Overall, Atlanta residents report that their symptoms of stress have decreased over the past two years.

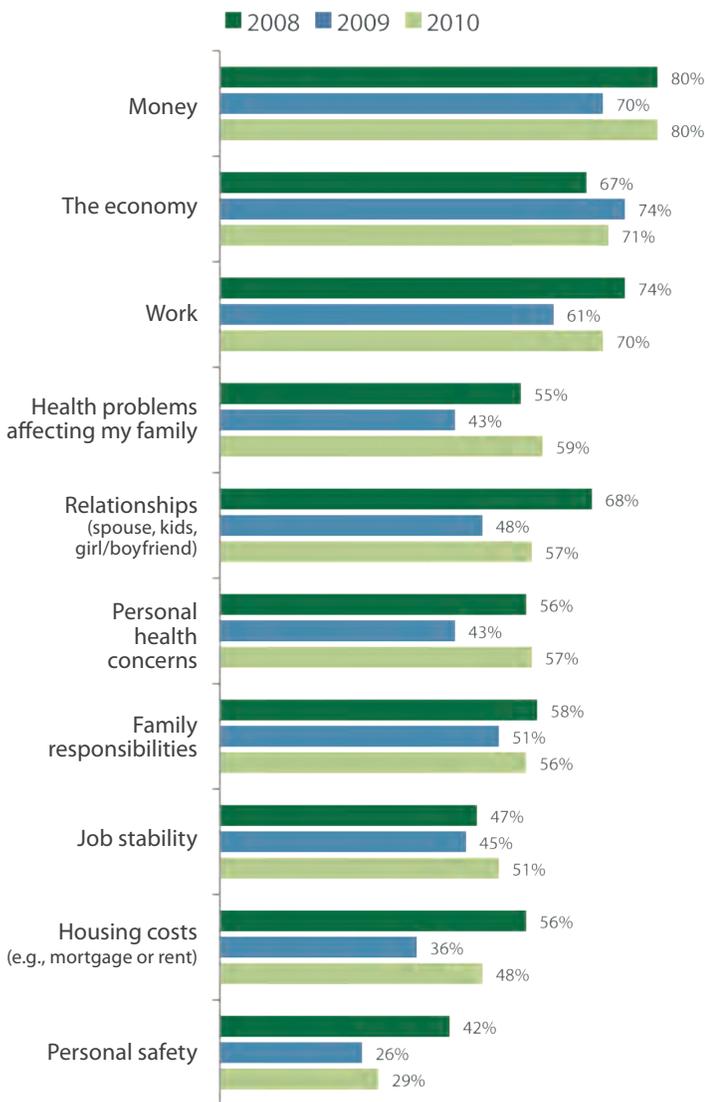
- Atlanta residents continue to report an average stress level of 5.8 (on a 10-point scale), about the same as last year. However, this level exceeds the level of stress that Atlantans consider healthy (3.8).
- Just 27 percent of Atlanta residents now report having a “great deal” of stress (an 8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale), down from 37 percent last year.
- While the percentage of Atlanta residents reporting that their stress levels have increased over the past year remains high, fewer residents report that their stress levels have increased over the past year (36 percent) than in 2009 (44 percent).
- Housing costs are a source of stress for more Atlanta residents compared to last year (48 percent in 2010 compared with 36 percent in 2009).
- Money (80 percent), the economy (71 percent) and work (70 percent) remain the most commonly reported sources of stress for Atlanta residents this year, but significantly more Atlantans say that money is a source of stress this year compared with last year (70 percent cited money as a source of stress in 2009).



# STRESS IN ATLANTA

More than two-thirds of Atlanta residents say they are satisfied with their jobs.

## Causes of Stress in Atlanta (% Somewhat/Very Significant)



BASE: Atlanta residents 2008 (n=243); 2009 (n=201); 2010 (n=213)  
Q625 Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

## Employment and Stress

Overall, the percentage of employed Atlantans reporting job-related stress and job satisfaction remained the same as in 2009. However, fewer residents reported being satisfied with how employers help them to balance work and non-work demands this year.

- Four in 10 Atlantans (38 percent) say that during a workday they typically feel tense or stressed out (compared with 40 percent who said this in 2009).
- More than two-thirds of Atlanta residents (67 percent) say they are satisfied with their jobs (similarly 66 percent said this in 2009).
- More than half of Atlanta residents (51 percent) report that job stability is a significant source of stress (compared with 45 percent who said this in 2009).
- Just a third of Atlanta workers (33 percent) say they are satisfied with the way their employer helps them balance work and non-work demands, down from 48 percent last year.
- Thirty-two percent of employed residents said they were satisfied with work-related growth and development opportunities this year, down from 43 percent last year.

## Stress and Well-Being

Though the percentage of Atlanta residents experiencing a “great deal” of stress has decreased, the percentage of residents reporting that a health care provider diagnosed them with depression has doubled. Other health conditions have also been reported in higher numbers than previous years.

- In 2009, 10 percent of Atlanta residents reported being told they were depressed by a health care provider in the past five years; that figure rose to 20 percent this year.
- Those in Atlanta who were told by a health care provider that they have an anxiety disorder increased from seven percent in 2009 to 10 percent in 2010.
- Consistent with these data, fewer Atlantans in 2009 view themselves as healthy. The percentage of Atlantans who reported their health as excellent or very good decreased from 42 percent in 2009 to 34 percent in 2010.

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More than half of Atlanta residents said they are doing enough to manage their stress this year, compared with 62 percent last year and 55 percent in 2008.

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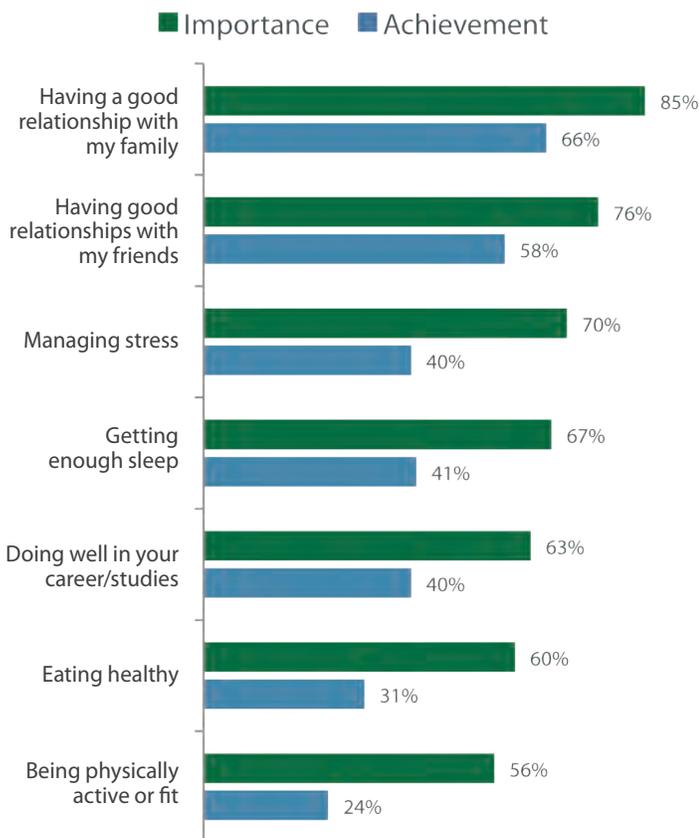
In 2009, the percentage of Atlantans reporting that they were doing enough to manage their stress rose from the previous year. But in 2010, a significant number of Atlantans reported gaps between the importance they place on managing stress and their ability to be successful in this area.

- More than half of Atlanta residents (55 percent) said they are doing enough to manage their stress this year, compared with 62 percent last year.
- There is a gap between what aspects of well-being adults in Atlanta find important and how well they are doing at achieving those goals. The biggest gaps between importance and achievement were for managing stress (70 percent feel this is extremely/very important and 40 percent say they are doing an excellent/very good job), eating healthy (60 percent feel this is important and 31 percent say they are successful) and getting enough sleep (67 percent feel this is important and 41 percent say they are successful). However, Atlanta residents were more likely than Americans overall to say they were doing an excellent or very good job in getting enough sleep (41 percent vs. 29 percent).



One in 10 Atlantans say that traffic has a lot or a great deal of impact on their day-to-day stress levels.

## Importance vs. Achievement for Atlanta Residents



BASE: Atlanta residents (n=213)  
Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?

## Barriers to Change

There are major barriers for Atlanta residents to overcome when attempting to alter their behaviors to lead a healthier life. Lack of willpower remained one of the most frequently cited barriers for Atlanta residents.

- Of those in Atlanta who have received a lifestyle or behavior change recommendation from a health care provider, nearly one-third reported that willpower prevented them from making the changes recommended (compared with 30 percent who said this in 2009).
- Although 73 percent of Atlantans feel willpower can be learned, they identified specific barriers preventing them from improving their willpower. Specifically, they said that having enough confidence (60 percent), more energy (49 percent), more time (46 percent) and more money (34 percent) would help them improve their willpower. Nearly half said they could improve their willpower if they cared more about their own health (46 percent).
- The percentage of Atlanta residents saying it was too expensive for them to make the lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by their health care provider climbed significantly, rising to 21 percent in 2010 from 13 percent in 2009.

## Stress on the Road

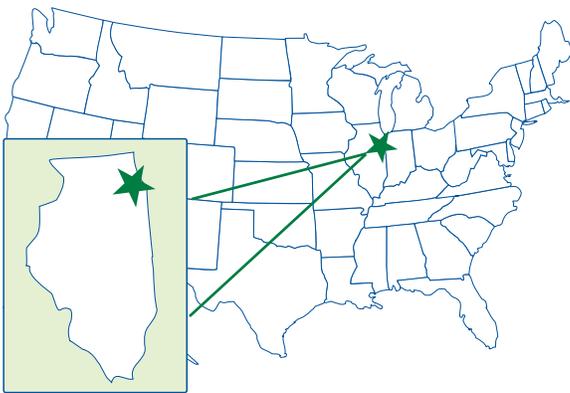
When asked how much impact traffic has on daily stress levels, the vast majority of Atlanta residents agree that traffic has some impact (70 percent). One in 10 Atlantans say that traffic has a lot or a great deal of impact on their day-to-day stress levels (10 percent).



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN CHICAGO



Chicago\* workers are more likely to report feeling stress at work in 2010 and less likely to say that they are satisfied with their jobs. At the same time, more than four in 10 report that their stress has increased in the past year. Increasing numbers of Chicago residents report having been diagnosed with high blood pressure this year, and health issues are cited more frequently as sources of stress in Chicago than previously. In addition, residents of Chicago are more likely than Americans nationally to say they engage in unhealthy behaviors to manage stress.

- Even though Chicago residents report a lower average stress level this year (5.5 on a 10-point scale) compared with last year (5.8 on a 10-point scale), four in 10 (44 percent) of them say their stress levels have increased in the past year.
- Work (74 percent), the economy (71 percent) and money (70 percent) are frequently cited sources of stress in Chicago.
- The percentage of Chicago residents who report feeling tense or stressed out during the work day climbed from 28 percent in 2009 to 37 percent in 2010.
- Just 60 percent of Chicago-area employees report being satisfied with their jobs, down from 66 percent last year and 74 percent two years ago.
- Chicago residents are more likely than American adults overall to report “personal health concerns” (63 percent vs. 52 percent) and “family health concerns” (59 percent vs. 47 percent) as a somewhat or very significant source of stress. In Chicago, concerns about personal health increased dramatically as a source of stress in 2010 (up from 37 percent in 2009), as did concerns about family health (up from 43 percent in 2009).
- Similar to findings about Americans in general, Chicago residents were likely to rate the importance of behaviors that improve well-being considerably higher than their personal achievement in these areas. The biggest reported gaps between importance and achievement were in the areas of sleep and stress management.



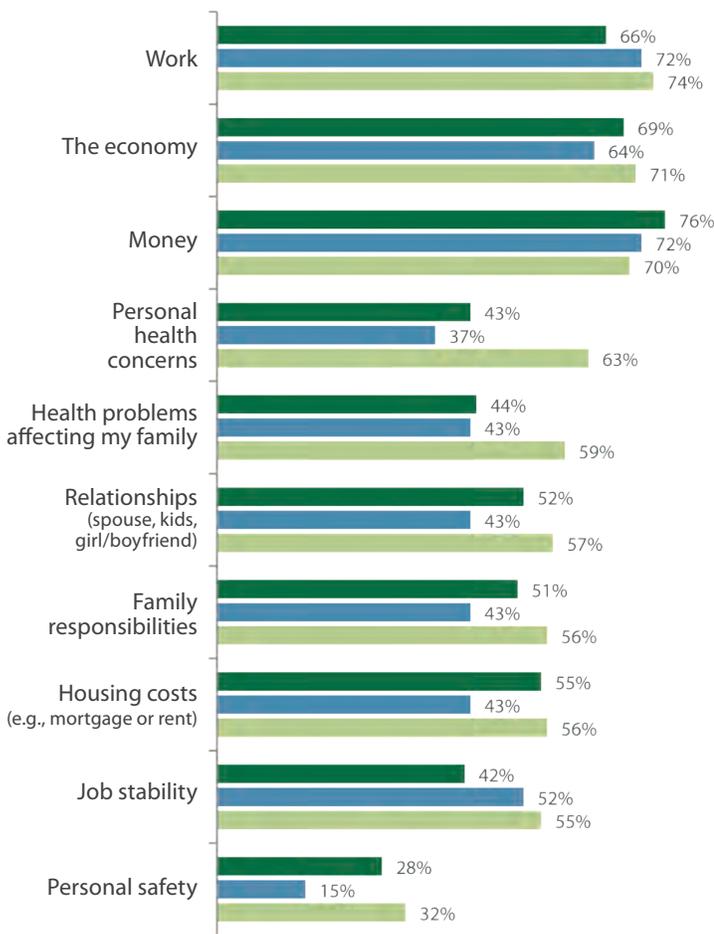
# STRESS IN CHICAGO

Chicagoans are more likely to report that they eat to manage stress than Americans overall.

- Nearly six out of 10 adults in Chicago (57 percent) say that getting enough sleep is extremely/very important but only one in four (25 percent) say they are doing an excellent/very good job of doing so.
- Managing stress is a close second in terms of the gap between importance and achievement; while six in 10 Chicagoans (59 percent) feel it is important, only 35 percent say they are successful in their efforts.

## Causes of Stress in Chicago (% Somewhat/Very Significant)

■ 2008 ■ 2009 ■ 2010



## Health and Exercise

While half of adults (51 percent) in Chicago say they are doing enough to manage their stress, many are reporting they turn to unhealthy behaviors to manage stress and are experiencing health-related symptoms of stress.

- More Chicago residents report that being too busy prevents them from doing more to relieve their stress (24 percent) than did last year (18 percent).
- Chicagoans are more likely to report that they eat to manage stress than Americans overall (35 percent vs. 26 percent).
- Nearly half of Chicago residents said they had lain awake at night (47 percent) or eaten too much or unhealthy foods (49 percent) in the past month as a result of stress.
- Many Chicago residents report physical and emotional symptoms of stress, like fatigue (46 percent) and irritability or anger (44 percent). In addition, the percentage of Chicago residents reporting that they feel depressed because of stress rose from 28 percent in 2009 to 40 percent in 2010.

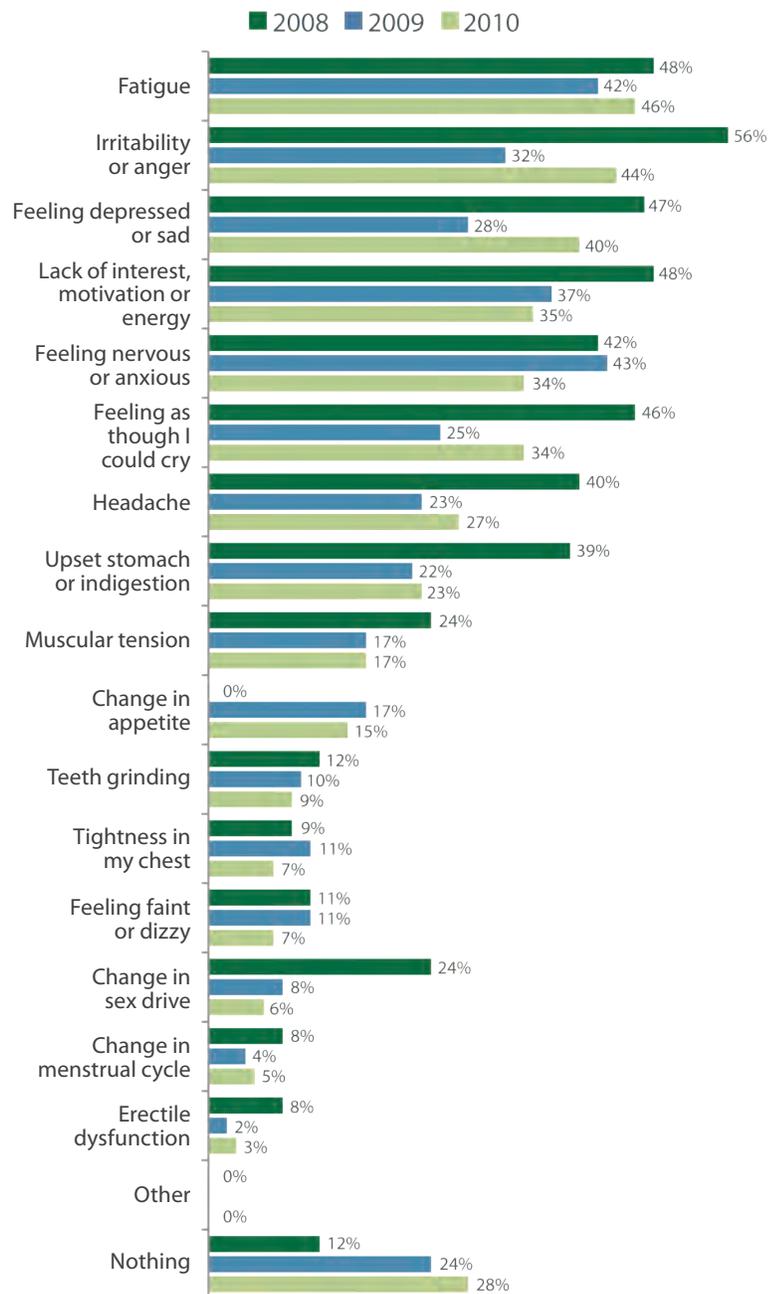
BASE: Chicago residents 2008 (n=231); 2009 (n=208); 2010 (n=208)  
Q625 Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

- The percentage of Chicago residents reporting that a doctor told them they had high blood pressure jumped significantly (from 19 percent in 2009 to 29 percent in 2010).
- Four out of 10 Chicago residents have been told by their doctors to make lifestyle changes such as getting more exercise (45 percent), losing weight (39 percent) or eating a healthier diet (31 percent). However, fewer than half (46 percent) of Chicago adults exercise regularly and one in four (23 percent) do not exercise at all.
- Chicago residents are more likely than Americans overall to say their family does not try to eat healthy foods (9 percent vs. 4 percent). Overall, four in 10 Chicagoans report it takes a great amount or some effort to get their families to eat healthy foods (44 percent).

## No Easy Fix

While Chicagoans report that a lack of willpower is the most commonly mentioned barrier preventing them from making the changes recommended to them by a health care provider, fewer Chicagoans report willpower as a factor than did so last year (cited by 32 percent of residents compared with 46 percent in 2009). More Chicagoans this year, however, report that cost is a barrier preventing them from making lifestyle and behavior changes — those who said “it is too expensive” when asked what prevented them from making the lifestyle changes recommended by their health care provider rose from 10 percent in 2009 to 25 percent this year.

## Physical Symptoms of Stress in Chicago



BASE: Chicago residents 2008 (n=231); 2009 (n=208); 2010 (n=208)  
 Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?



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When asked if they were concerned or worried that the state's financial crisis may impact their personal life or their families, four in 10 Chicago residents said that they are worried that it will impact their ability to access health care services, personal safety or the availability of emergency services.

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When those who exercise less than once a week were asked to identify what prevented them from exercising, adults living in Chicago said the biggest barrier was a lack of motivation (36 percent), followed by being too tired (31 percent), not liking exercise (29 percent) or being too busy (27 percent).

### **Impact of Illinois Financial Crisis**

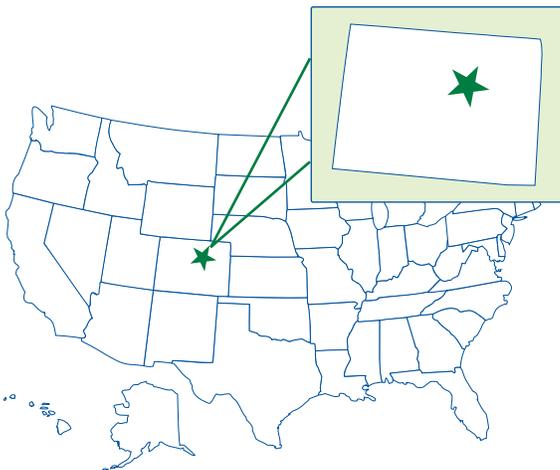
When asked if they were concerned or worried that the state's financial crisis may impact their personal life or their families, four in 10 Chicago residents said that they are worried that it will impact their ability to access health care services (40 percent), personal safety (39 percent) or the availability of emergency services (39 percent).



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN DENVER



Work, the economy and money remain the most often cited causes of stress reported by Denver residents\*, with relationship issues and health concerns (both personal and family) increasing as significant sources of stress over the past year. The percentage of adults in Denver who characterize their own health as excellent or very good has declined significantly over the past year, and the proportion saying they have been told by a health care professional that they are overweight/obese or have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes has significantly increased.

### Stress About Money in the Mile-High City

- Roughly one-quarter of Denver residents (24 percent) say they have a great deal of stress in their daily lives (an 8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale), down from 35 percent of residents last year. Still, half of all residents (48 percent) say their stress level has increased over the past year.
- Mirroring reports from the rest of the nation, money (73 percent), work (71 percent) and the economy (68 percent) continued to be the most commonly reported sources of stress for people in Denver (77 percent of Denver residents cited money as a source of stress, 80 percent cited work and 59 percent cited the economy in 2009). Meanwhile, relationships (59 percent in 2010 vs. 44 percent in 2009), personal health concerns (55 percent in 2010 vs. 38 percent in 2009) and family health concerns (55 percent in 2010 vs. 37 percent in 2009) grew as reported sources of stress for adults in Denver over the past year.
- Since 2009, reported job satisfaction has improved significantly, with 72 percent of working residents saying they are satisfied with their job, up from 60 percent. However, almost half of all employed Denver residents also say they are stressed at work (47 percent).
- The percentage of residents who feel they are doing enough to manage their stress has increased since last year (60 percent vs. 52 percent). But almost one-quarter of residents (24 percent) say they are not doing enough to manage their stress.



# STRESS IN DENVER

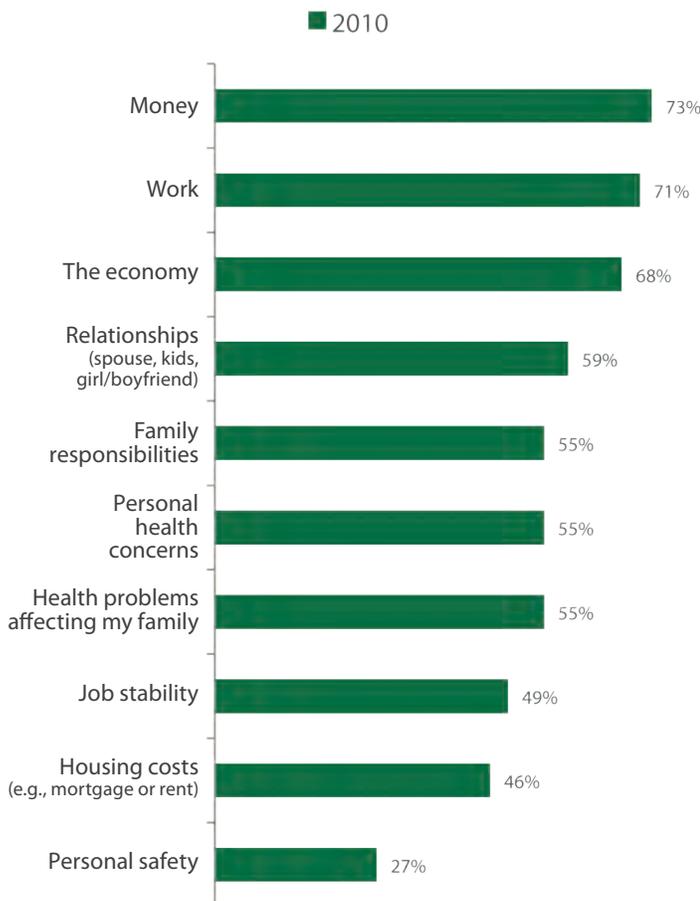
The number of Denver residents told by a health care provider that they have type 2 diabetes has tripled, from 4 percent in 2009 to 13 percent in 2010.

## More Report Health Problems

While the majority of adults in Denver say they exercise and eat a healthy diet, many say that they don't have enough time to make the lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by a health care provider, and personal reports show that some aspects of their health are on the decline.

- The percentage of adults who say they are in excellent or very good health has dropped in the past year, from 49 percent to 38 percent.
- The proportion of those who report having been told by a health care professional that they are overweight or obese has increased significantly over the past year (28 percent in 2009 compared with 38 percent in 2010). And the number told by a health care provider that they have type 2 diabetes has tripled, from 4 percent in 2009 to 13 percent in 2010. Both rates are higher than those reported by the general population — 25 percent of Americans report that a health care provider has told them they are obese and 8 percent have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.
- Four in 10 (43 percent) say they have been told by a health care provider to exercise more and 42 percent have had a health care provider recommend losing weight. Three in 10 (30 percent) report having been told to eat a healthier diet.
- The majority of Denver residents say they eat healthy food very often, almost always or always (56 percent). In addition, 62 percent say they exercise several times per week or more.
- Denver residents are more likely than Americans overall (64 percent vs. 48 percent) to say they exercise or walk to relieve stress.

**Causes of Stress in Denver**  
(% Somewhat/Very Significant)



**BASE: Denver residents 2010 (n=206)**  
**Q625** Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

- Denver residents who exercise once a week or more are more likely to say that physical activity gives them energy (58 percent vs. 47 percent of Americans who exercise with the same frequency), helps them manage their stress (52 percent vs. 41 percent) and makes them feel alert (45 percent vs. 31 percent).

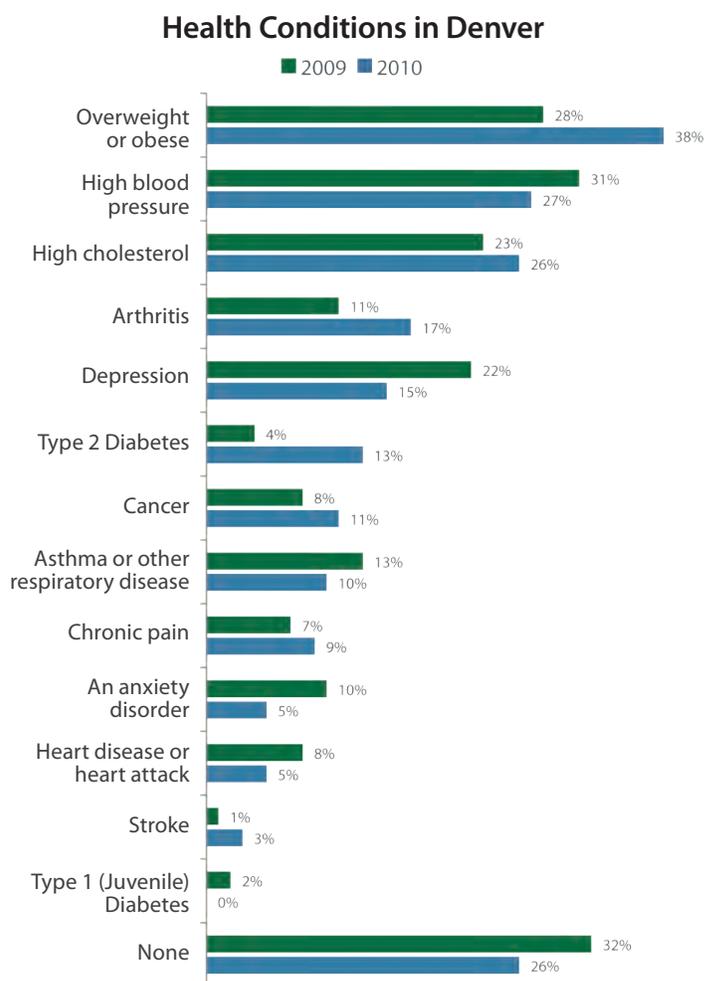
## Barriers to Change

- One in four Denver residents cite a lack of time (26 percent) and lack of willpower (26 percent) most frequently as barriers to making the lifestyle changes recommended to them by a health care provider. The percentage citing lack of time rose from last year (up from 17 percent) while the percentage citing lack of willpower fell (down from 34 percent).
- Two-thirds (65 percent) of Denver residents feel that getting enough sleep is extremely or very important but only one in four (26 percent) feel they are doing an excellent or very good job of it. Denver residents are more likely than Americans overall to say they have experienced fatigue as a result of stress in the past month (53 percent vs. 41 percent).
- Managing stress is a close second in terms of the gap between importance and achievement; while six in 10 (62 percent) feel it is important, only half as many (31 percent) admit they do an excellent/very good job managing their stress.

## Easygoing Attitude?

On the whole, Denver residents regard themselves as being pretty “laid back.” More than half (53 percent) feel that phrase describes them well, very well or completely, and another 38 percent feel it describes them at least somewhat.

Denver residents are more likely than Americans overall to say they experience fatigue as a result of stress.



BASE: Denver residents 2009 (n=202); 2010 (n=206)  
 Q2105 Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you have any of the following conditions? Please select all that apply.

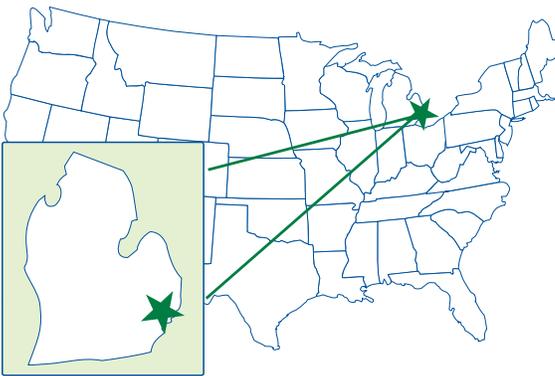




# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN DETROIT



Detroit residents\* report that they are experiencing less stress today than they were a year ago and are far less likely to say that stress gets in the way of their efforts to make lifestyle and behavior changes than Americans in general. While they continue to cite money, the economy and work as the leading causes of stress, compared to last year, significantly fewer adults in Detroit report that they feel tense or stressed out during a typical workday. Despite those reports, nearly half of Detroit residents say they have been told by their health care provider to lose weight and get more exercise.

### Stress on the Decline in the Motor City

Residents of Detroit report being generally less stressed today than they were last year.

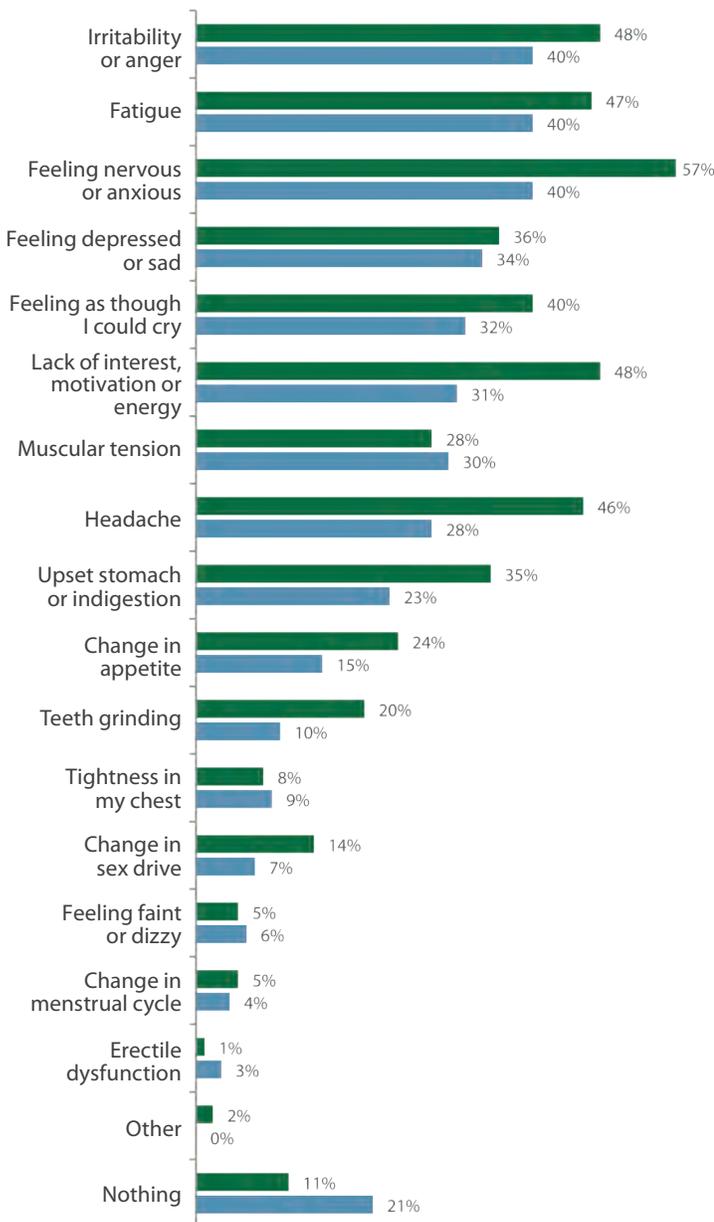
- The percentage reporting that they are under a “great deal” (an 8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale) of stress has fallen, from one-third of Detroit residents in 2009 (33 percent) to one-quarter in 2010 (25 percent), while the percent claiming they have “little or no stress” (a 1, 2 or 3 on a 10-point scale) has more than doubled in the past year, rising from 13 percent in 2009 to 29 percent in 2010.
- After holding steady for two years, the average reported stress level in Detroit also has fallen significantly, from 6.2 (on a 10-point scale) in 2008 and 6.1 in 2009 to 5.4 in 2010.
- The number of respondents reporting an increase in stress over the past year likewise fell substantially, from six in 10 Detroit residents (61 percent) in 2009 to four in 10 (37 percent) in 2010.
- Adults in Detroit report experiencing significantly fewer physical and emotional symptoms of stress this year, such as irritability (40 percent in 2010, down from 48 percent in 2009), fatigue (40 percent in 2010, down from 47 percent in 2009) and anxiety (40 percent in 2010, down from 57 percent in 2009). Similarly, fewer Detroit adults report that



# STRESS IN DETROIT

## Physical Symptoms of Stress in Detroit

■ 2009 ■ 2010



they have lain awake at night due to stress (40 percent reported having lain awake at night due to stress in the past month in 2010 compared with 62 percent in 2009).

- The percentage of Detroit residents who say they are doing enough to manage their stress levels has risen from 45 percent to 64 percent, a figure that is significantly higher than the national average (55 percent).
- Money (77 percent), the economy (70 percent) and work (69 percent) continue to be the most frequently cited sources of stress for Detroit residents (74 percent cited money, 72 percent cited the economy, and 77 percent cited work as sources of stress in 2009).
- The proportion of adults in Detroit who say they are stressed at work also has fallen since last year (38 percent in 2010 from 53 percent in 2009), and the number who say they would recommend their place of work to others has risen (58 percent in 2010, up from 47 percent in 2009).

## Stress and Health

- Seven out of 10 adults in Detroit (70 percent) have been diagnosed with a chronic condition in the last five years. High blood pressure (33 percent), high cholesterol (30 percent) and obesity (28 percent) are the conditions most frequently reported by Detroit residents.
- Nearly half of Detroit residents have been told by their health care provider that they need to lose weight (48 percent) and more than four in 10 have been told to get more exercise (44 percent). A third (33 percent)

BASE: Detroit residents 2009 (n=207); 2010 (n=214)  
Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

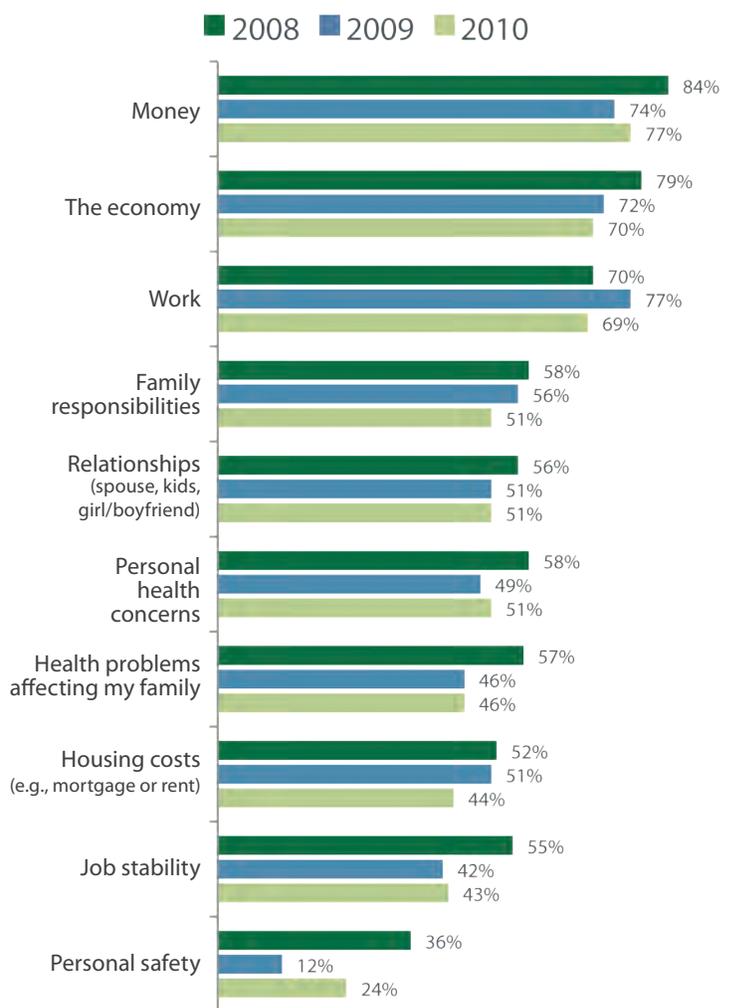
report having been advised to switch to a healthier diet. Sixteen percent have been instructed to reduce their level of stress, which is less than the percentage of Americans overall who have been told to reduce stress by a health care provider (21 percent).

Only 4 percent of Detroit residents cite stress as a barrier to change, down from 26 percent a year ago.

## Changing Unhealthy Behaviors

- In 2009, half of all Detroit residents (52 percent) said they lacked the willpower needed to make lifestyle changes recommended by their health care provider. That number fell to just one-third of residents (33 percent) this year. However, willpower remains the most frequently cited barrier to change for Detroit residents.
- Only 4 percent of Detroit residents cite stress as a barrier to change, down from 26 percent a year ago. In fact, they are less likely than Americans overall to cite stress as a barrier (4 percent vs. 10 percent).
- Detroit residents are less likely than Americans overall to report that their definition of willpower means they lack motivation (37 percent vs. 50 percent), get too discouraged (19 percent vs. 31 percent) or don't have energy (18 percent vs. 28 percent). The most common definition among Detroit residents was, "I am not disciplined or organized enough to make changes," (47 percent).
- Detroit residents report gaps between the value they place on some behaviors and their ability to be successful in these areas. For example, more than half of Detroit residents say that getting enough sleep is extremely/very important to them (58 percent), but only 31 percent say they are doing an excellent/very good job of this; likewise, 54 percent say that being

**Causes of Stress in Detroit**  
(% Somewhat/Very Significant)

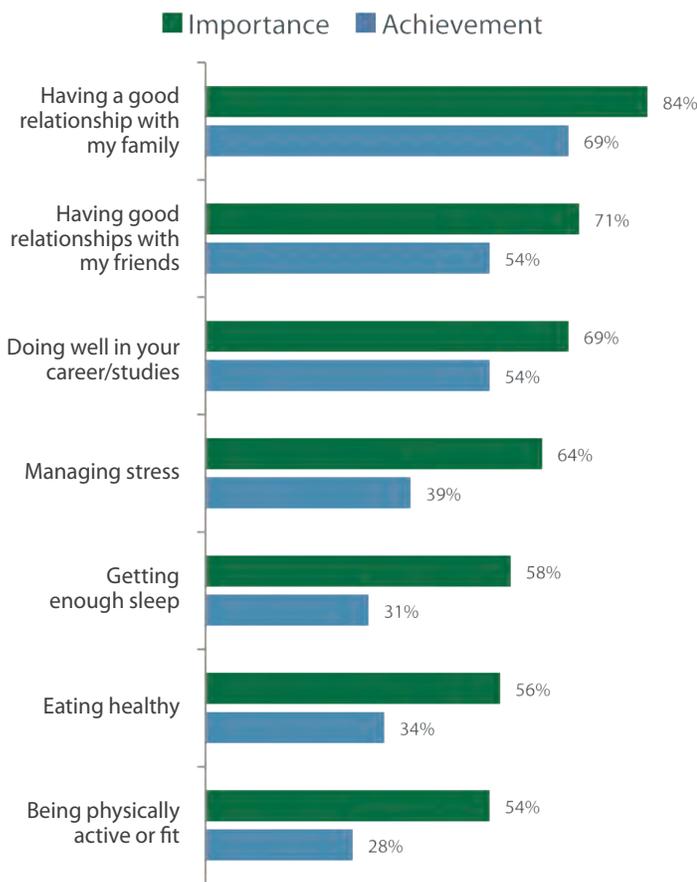


**BASE: Detroit residents 2008 (n=235); 2009 (n=207); 2010 (n=214)**  
**Q625** Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.



More than six out of 10 adults say it is extremely/very important to manage stress but only four in 10 say they are doing an excellent/very good job of achieving it.

### Importance vs. Achievement for Detroit Residents



BASE: Detroit residents (n=214)  
Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?

physically active is extremely/very important, but only 28 percent say they are doing an excellent/very good job of this. More than six out of 10 adults (64 percent) say it is extremely/very important to manage stress but only four in 10 (39 percent) say they are doing an excellent/very good job of achieving it.

- Among Detroit residents, having good relationships with family is cited as the most important aspect of well-being (84 percent say it is extremely/very important), much more so than eating healthy (56 percent) or being physically active (54 percent).
- To manage their stress, adults in Detroit are most likely to exercise or go for a walk (54 percent). Four in 10 say they read or spend time with family and friends (45 percent) and listen to music (44 percent).
- Lack of time is the most commonly mentioned reason why Detroit residents do not do more to manage their stress.

### Financial Optimism?

When asked directly whether they feel better about their family’s financial situation this year compared to last, only 27 percent of Detroit residents say they agree or strongly agree that things have improved. A greater percentage disagree or strongly disagree (37 percent) and 36 percent are ambivalent.



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN LOS ANGELES



Los Angeles residents\* report that stress levels are going up and are higher than the national average, while job satisfaction is lower. The number of LA residents who describe their health as excellent or very good is lower than the national average, and since 2009, there has been an increase in the percentage of adults who say they have been diagnosed with arthritis, asthma/respiratory disease or chronic pain.

### How Stressed is Los Angeles?

LA residents report more stress than Americans overall, and they cite the most common sources of stress — money and the economy — even more so than the rest of the nation.

- Almost three in 10 (29 percent) residents report having a great deal of stress (defined as an 8, 9 or 10 on a scale of 1 to 10), compared to 24 percent of Americans overall.
- A significantly higher number of residents attribute their stress to money (76 percent vs. 67 percent) and the economy (75 percent vs. 57 percent) this year than last.
- LA residents are more likely than Americans overall to point to the economy as a source of stress (75 percent vs. 65 percent) and less likely to cite family responsibilities (47 percent vs. 58 percent).
- Though there has been a significant decline in those reporting physical symptoms of stress, many admit to being irritable (45 percent), anxious or nervous (38 percent) or fatigued (36 percent) due to stress in the past month.

For many people in Los Angeles, work is also a source of stress (69 percent). The number of people reporting being satisfied with their jobs has been steadily dropping over the past three years.

- The percentage of individuals who report feeling stressed out at work jumped significantly, from 29 percent in 2009 to 39 percent in 2010.

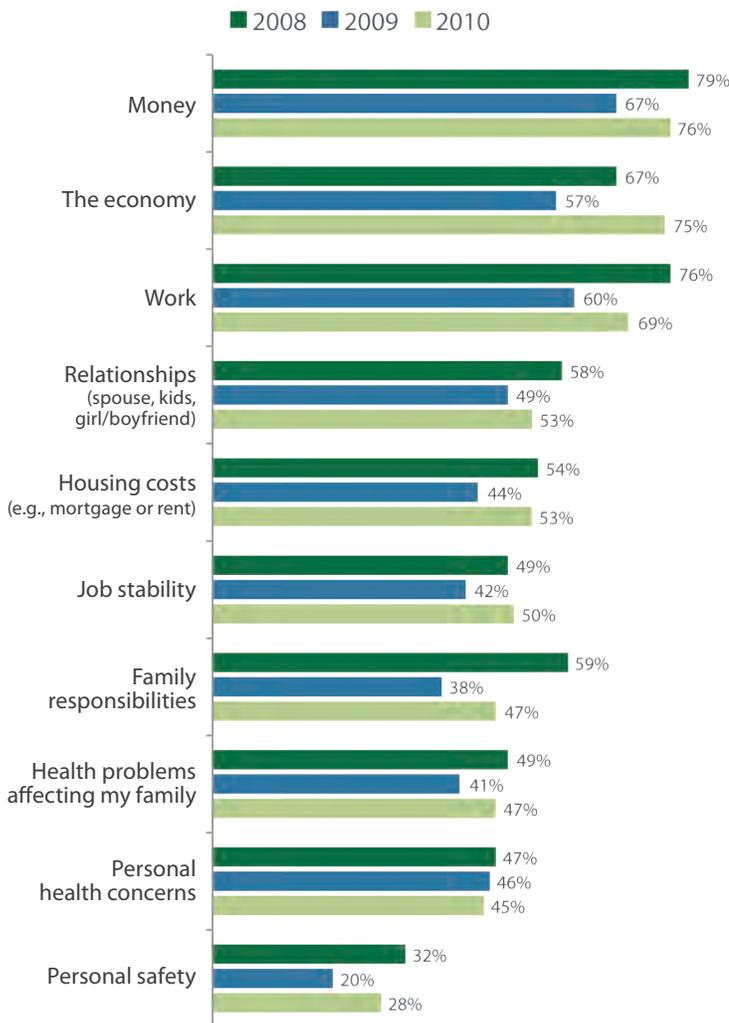


# STRESS IN LOS ANGELES

LA residents are more likely than American adults overall to report the economy as a significant source of stress.

- LA residents also report feeling less satisfied with their jobs than in previous years (58 percent in 2010, compared with 64 percent in 2009 and 67 percent in 2008), and they are less likely than Americans overall to recommend their place of work to others (44 percent vs. 53 percent).

## Causes of Stress in Los Angeles (% Somewhat/Very Significant)



BASE: Los Angeles residents 2008 (n=256); 2009 (n=205); 2010 (n=211)  
Q625 Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

## How Stress is Affecting Them

- Fewer LA residents than Americans overall say they are in excellent or very good health (just three in 10, nine points below the national average of 40 percent).
- Those who said they had been told by a health care provider that they were overweight or obese also rose, from 25 percent to 29 percent.

## Barriers to Change

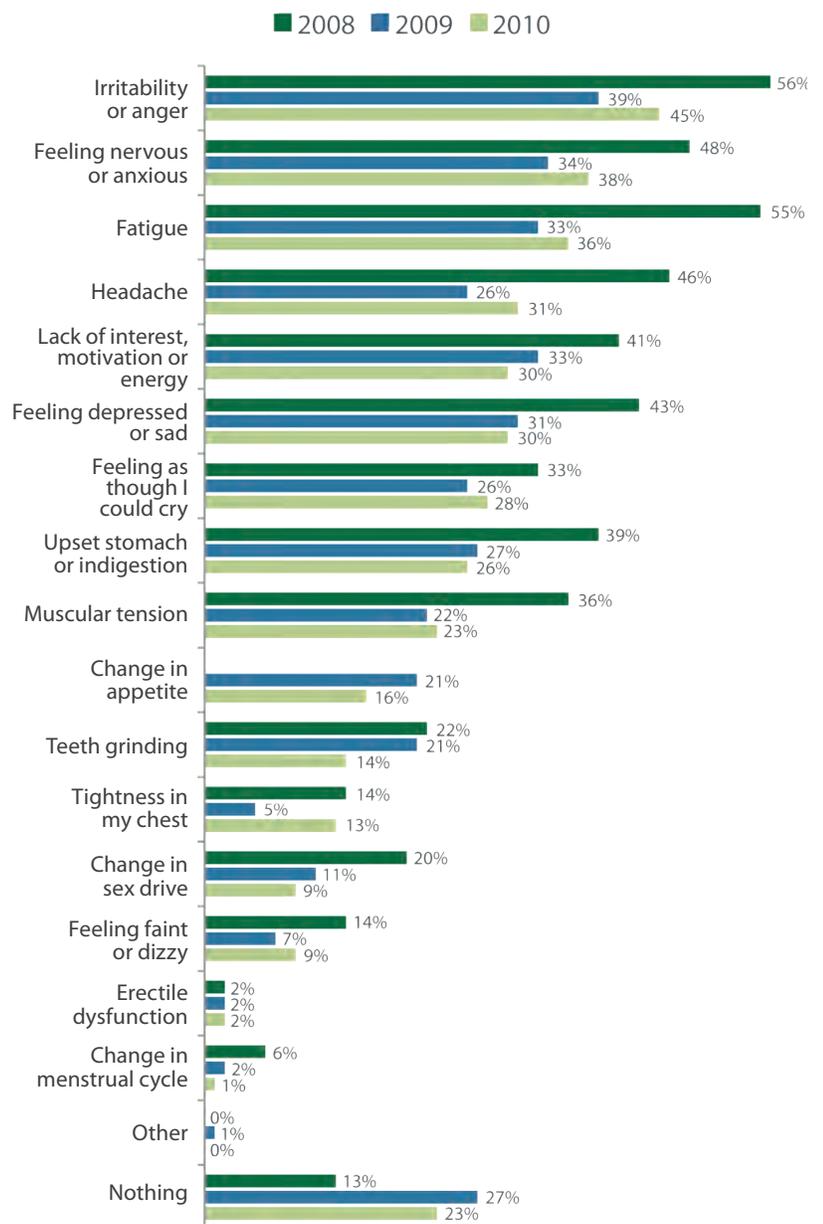
- On every item evaluated, adults rated the importance of the item considerably higher than their personal achievement on that item. The biggest gaps between importance and achievement are for getting enough sleep and managing stress. Two-thirds of adults (66 percent) say that getting enough sleep is extremely/very important but only one-third (35 percent) say they are doing an excellent/very good job of achieving it. Likewise, 62 percent feel managing stress is important, but only about half as many (34 percent) admit they do an excellent/very good job here.
- Fewer LA residents cite a lack of willpower for failing to make recommended lifestyle changes (32 percent vs. 41 percent in 2009), though it remains the most common obstacle, and fewer also say they don't have enough time (14 percent vs. 20 percent).

- However, twice as many cite a disability or health condition as a barrier to a healthy lifestyle (14 percent, up from 7 percent in 2009).
- LA residents are far less likely than Americans overall to manage their stress by praying (21 percent vs. 37 percent), going to religious services (11 percent vs. 22 percent) or shopping (7 percent vs. 15 percent).

## Do Looks Count When It Comes to Stress?

When asked to what degree pressure to look good impacts their stress level, nearly one-third (30 percent) of LA residents said that the pressure to look good impacts their stress levels moderately or “a lot.”

## Physical Symptoms of Stress in Los Angeles



BASE: Los Angeles residents 2008 (n=256); 2009 (n=205); 2010 (n=211)  
 Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?





# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN NEW YORK CITY



Financial concerns are on the rise as a source of stress among residents of New York City.\* There has been a significant increase since 2009 in the percentage of adults who cite the economy as a source of stress. Housing costs and concerns about personal health and safety are also mentioned more frequently as significant sources of stress since 2009. Overall, however, it appears that New Yorkers may be doing a better job at managing their stress — more than half say they are doing enough to manage their stress, fewer report unhealthy behaviors to manage stress and reported stress levels have been on the decline for the past several years.

Nevertheless, a large number of New Yorkers say that they experience physical symptoms of stress and the majority report that they are not successful in their efforts to achieve healthy behaviors.

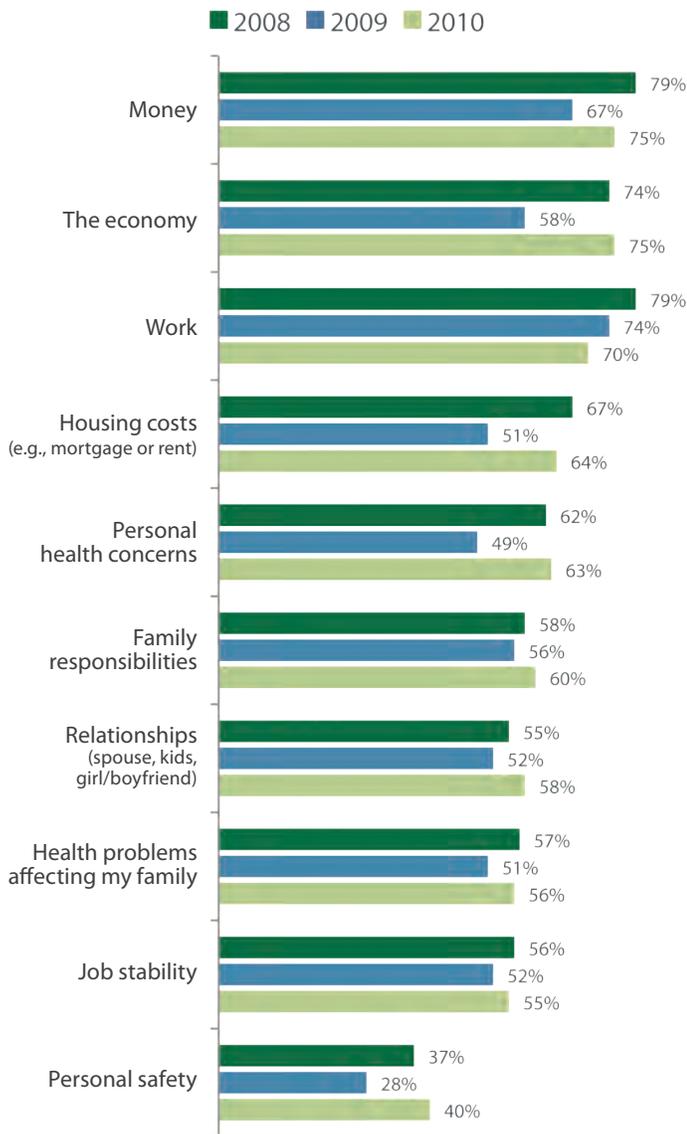
- New Yorkers are just as likely to say they have a “great deal” of stress (defined as an 8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale) as they are to report having “little or no” stress (defined as a 1, 2 or 3 on a 10-point scale). That is, 24 percent report having a “great deal” of stress and 24 percent report having “little or no” stress. One-third (34 percent) say their stress level has increased over the past year.
- In general, New Yorkers are reporting a steady decline in their stress levels. The average level of stress reported in New York City was a 6.1 on a 10-point scale in 2008, down to 5.7 in 2009 and 5.5 in 2010. Regardless of this reported decline, stress levels in New York City continue to exceed what residents say is a healthy level of stress — 3.7 on a 10-point scale.
- In New York City, there has been a significant increase since 2009 in the percentage of adults who cite the economy as a source of stress (75 percent of New York City residents cited the economy as a source of stress in 2010 compared with 58 percent in 2009).
- New Yorkers are more likely than Americans overall to cite the economy (75 percent vs. 65 percent), personal health concerns (63 percent vs. 52 percent), housing costs (64 percent vs. 52 percent) and personal safety (40 percent vs. 30 percent) as significant sources of stress.



# STRESS IN NEW YORK CITY

Forty-one percent of New Yorkers complain of stress on the job.

## Causes of Stress in New York City (% Somewhat/Very Significant)



BASE: New York residents 2008 (n=228); 2009 (n=208); 2010 (n=212)  
Q625 Below is a list of things people say cause stress in their lives. For each one, please indicate how significant a source of stress it is in your life.

- More than half of New York residents said they are doing enough to manage their stress (56 percent).

## Stress on the Job

- Compared with workers nationally, New Yorkers are less satisfied with their jobs (54 percent vs. 64 percent, 10 points below the national average) and less likely to recommend their workplace to others (44 percent vs. 53 percent).
- Forty-one percent complain of stress on the job, and one-third (35 percent) say they intend to seek employment elsewhere in the next year — a level four points above the national average (31 percent).

## Addressing Stress in the Big Apple

- New Yorkers are more likely than Americans overall to report that they walk/exercise (62 percent vs. 48 percent) and meditate/do yoga (13 percent vs. 7 percent) to relieve their stress.
- Since 2008, there has been a significant decline in the number of New Yorkers who report eating to relieve stress (48 percent to 30 percent in 2010).
- There also has been a significant decline since 2008 in the percentage of New Yorkers who say they have skipped a meal as a result of stress (49 percent in 2008 compared with 31 percent in 2010).
- More than half of New York City residents say they eat healthy foods (56 percent say they eat healthy foods very often, almost always or always) and exercise regularly (58 percent say they exercise several times a week or more).

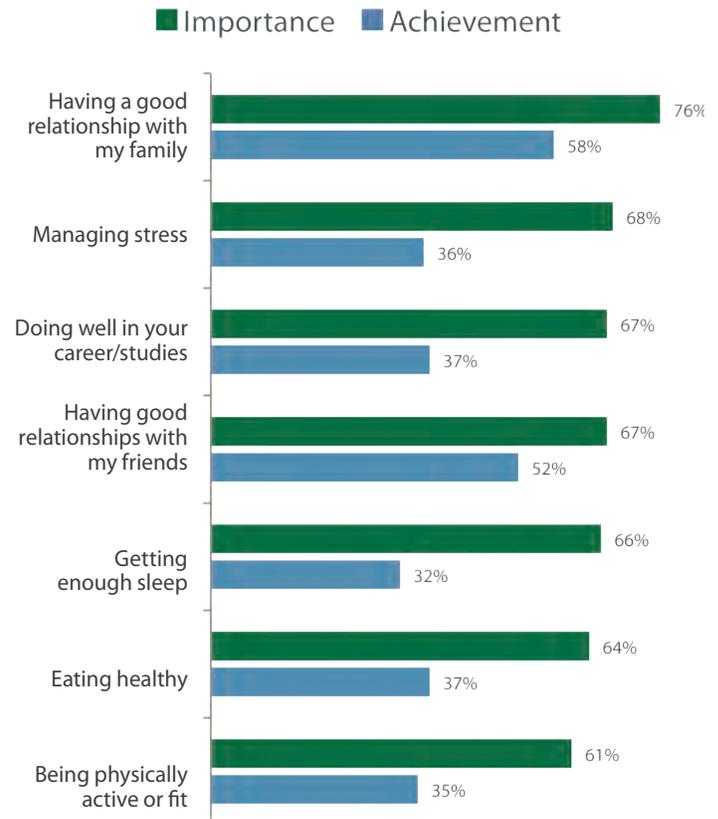
- While losing weight is the most commonly reported reason New Yorkers say they exercise (67 percent), they are more likely than adults nationally to say they exercise because it makes them happy (51 percent vs. 40 percent), it's something they enjoy (51 percent vs. 39 percent) and something they are good at (23 percent vs. 15 percent).

More than one in five (New Yorkers) cite a lack of time for failing to adequately manage stress.

## Health in New York City

- Many New Yorkers report that they have been told by their health care provider within the past five years to lose weight (34 percent), exercise more (31 percent) or eat a healthier diet (25 percent).
- On all aspects of well-being, New Yorkers report gaps between what they say is important and how successful they are at achieving those goals. However, the biggest gaps between how they rated the importance of these behaviors versus performance came in getting enough sleep (66 percent say it is extremely/very important while 32 percent think they are doing an excellent/very good job at doing so) and managing stress (68 percent vs. 36 percent).
- More than one in five (22 percent) reported lack of time prevents them from doing more to manage their stress.
- Eight of 10 New Yorkers (80 percent) report that they have experienced physical or emotional symptoms of stress over the past month. Less than half of New Yorkers report experiencing irritability or anger (45 percent) and nervousness or anxiousness (44 percent) and a third of New Yorkers report experiencing fatigue (38 percent) and headaches (33 percent) as a result of stress.

### Importance vs. Achievement for New York City Residents



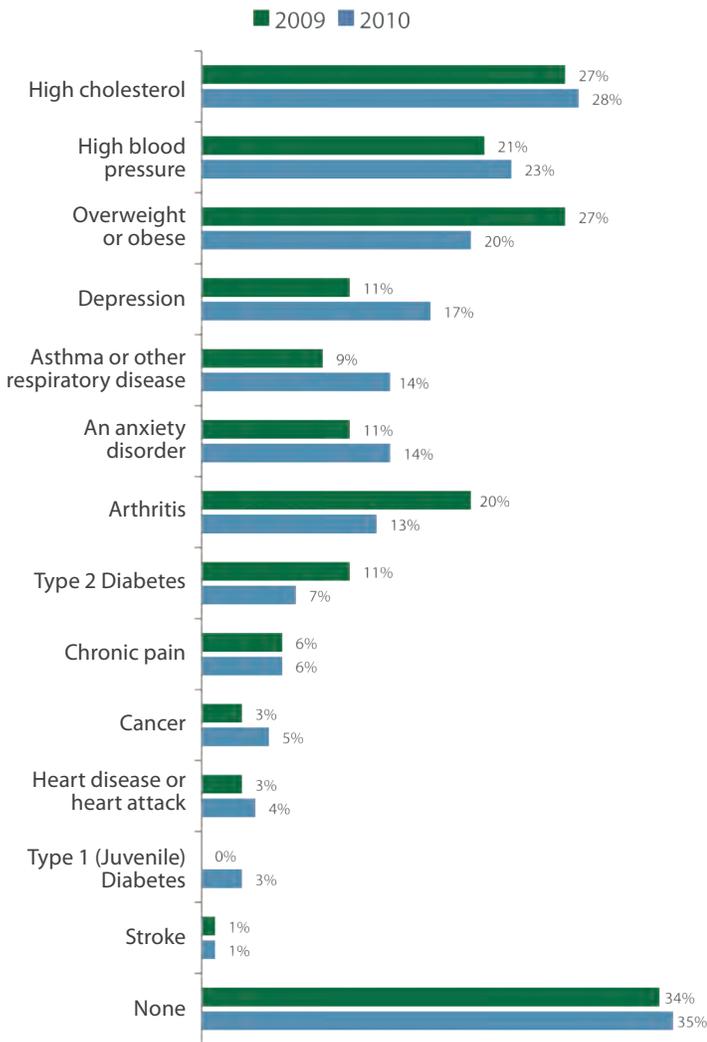
BASE: New York residents (n=212)  
 Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
 Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?



# STRESS IN NEW YORK CITY

More New Yorkers this year than last report being diagnosed with depression.

## Health Conditions in New York City



BASE: New York residents 2009 (n=208); 2010 (n=212)  
Q2105 Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you have any of the following conditions? Please select all that apply.

- Four in 10 New York City residents say they have eaten too much or eaten unhealthy foods or lain awake at night in the past month due to stress (44 percent for both responses).
- Forty-three percent of New Yorkers rate their health as excellent or good, however, one in four have been diagnosed with high cholesterol (28 percent), with high blood pressure (23 percent) and 20 percent have been diagnosed as obese within the past five years.
- More New Yorkers this year than last report being diagnosed with depression (17 percent compared with 11 percent).
- Of those who received a lifestyle or behavior change recommendation from their health care provider, one-fourth of New Yorkers reported that they didn't have the willpower to make the lifestyle and behavior changes recommended (down from 30 percent in 2009), but the number who said it took too much effort to change rose substantially, from 11 percent to more than one in five residents (21 percent). In addition, those who said they lacked confidence in their ability to change also nearly doubled (from 9 percent to 17 percent).

## Pace of Life in New York City

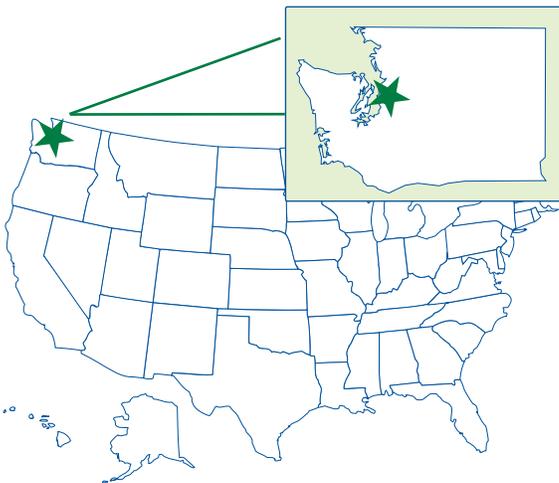
When asked whether the fast pace of New York City increases their stress levels, New Yorkers are split between considering the pace of city life in New York as a contributor to their daily stress. Thirty-seven percent agree or strongly agree that it does, while 32 percent disagree or strongly disagree with that statement.



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN SEATTLE



Seattle adults\* report declining stress levels and have been doing so steadily since 2008. Adults in Seattle cite less concern about job stability than Americans overall and, consistent with their reported lower stress levels, they report fewer physical and emotional symptoms of stress now than in previous years. However, an increasing number of Seattle residents have reported that they have been diagnosed with high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

### Less Stress in Seattle

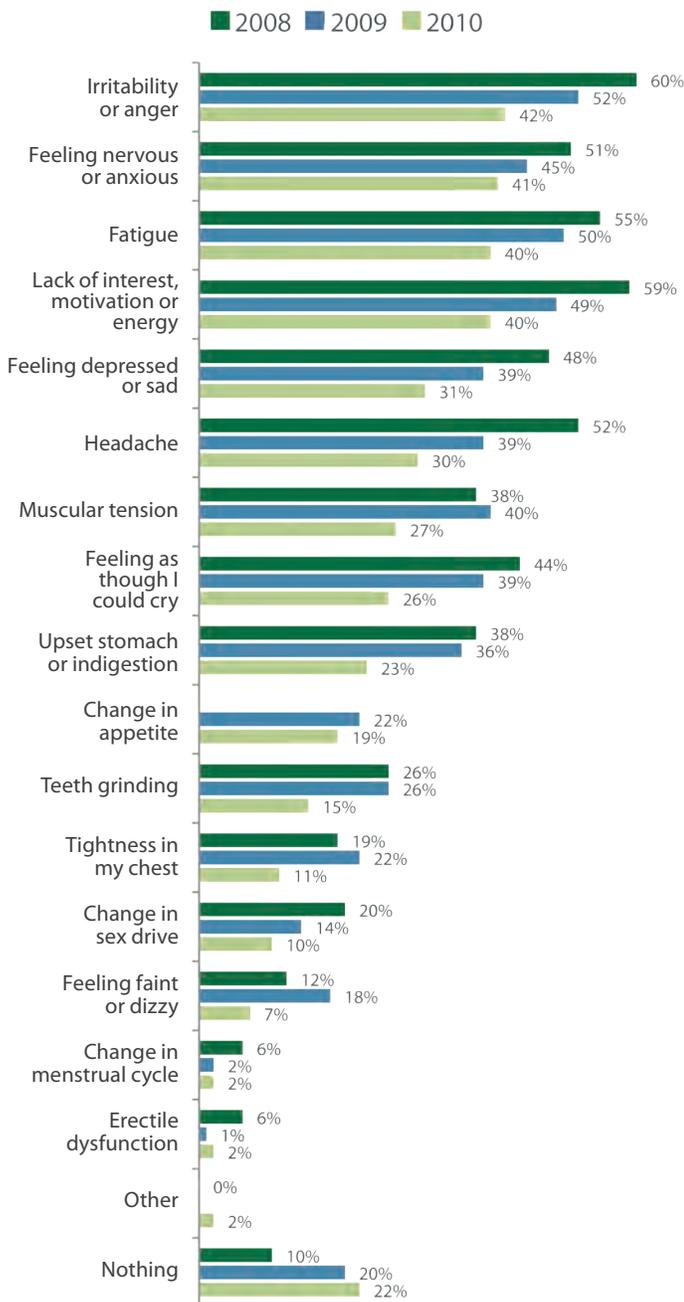
Adults in Seattle say they've been feeling less and less stressed over the past several years.

- For the first time since 2008, more adults report having “little or no” stress (31 percent report a stress level of 1, 2 or 3 on a 10-point scale) than a “great deal” of stress (20 percent report a stress level of 8, 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale). In 2008, 12 percent of Seattle residents reported having “little or no” stress and in 2009, 30 percent reported low stress levels.
- The average reported stress level in Seattle has declined significantly since 2008. Seattle residents reported an average stress level of 5.1 (on a 10-point scale) in 2010, down from 5.4 in 2009 and 6.1 in 2008.
- Seattle residents are more likely than Americans overall to say their stress levels have decreased over the past five years (41 percent vs. 25 percent).
- The majority of Seattle residents (62 percent) report they feel they are doing enough to manage their stress. The proportion of those who say they are not doing enough dropped significantly from last year, from 26 percent to 18 percent.
- In keeping with this trend, Seattle residents also report fewer physical and emotional symptoms of stress in the last month. Over the past two years, they are less likely to cite that they experienced irritability or anger (60 percent in



# STRESS IN SEATTLE

## Physical Symptoms of Stress in Seattle



BASE: Seattle residents 2008 (n=259); 2009 (n=200); 2010 (n=214)  
 Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

2008, 52 percent in 2009 and 42 percent in 2010), headaches (52 percent in 2008, 39 percent last year and 30 percent now) or a lack of motivation (59 percent in 2008, 49 percent last year and 40 percent in 2010) as a result of stress.

## Stress Related to Work

- Although more than four in 10 employed Seattle residents (42 percent in 2009 and 2010) still say they feel stressed during the workday, Seattle workers are less likely than Americans overall to report job stability as a source of stress (39 percent vs. 49 percent).
- Workers in Seattle are more likely than Americans overall to say they are satisfied with their employer's health and safety initiatives (51 percent vs. 38 percent).

## Stress and Health

Seattle residents report that they're healthier than ever. And, in fact, many say they are engaging in healthy behaviors that support these personal health assessments. However, barriers to healthy living remain, and it's clear Seattle residents — more of whom reported being diagnosed with high blood pressure this year and who report depression in greater numbers than Americans overall, despite other health gains — still have room for improvement.

- The proportion of Seattle residents reporting they are in excellent or very good health has risen since last year (44 percent vs. 37 percent). More Seattle residents than Americans overall report that their health is excellent or very good (44 percent vs. 40 percent).

- Seattle residents are more likely than Americans overall to report eating healthy foods always or almost always (34 percent vs. 24 percent).
- People living in Seattle say they are more likely than Americans overall to exercise or walk to relieve stress (66 percent vs. 48 percent).
- Seattle residents are more likely than Americans overall to say they exercise because it gives them energy (60 percent vs. 47 percent).
- Regardless of their likelihood to report that they are in good health and engage in healthy behaviors, Seattle residents report gaps between the importance they place on some behaviors associated with well-being and their ability to succeed in these areas. The biggest gaps between importance and achievement were for managing stress (63 percent say it is extremely/very important vs. 33 percent who say they are doing an excellent/very good job of achieving it) and getting enough sleep (65 percent say it is extremely/very important vs. 37 percent who say they are doing an excellent/very good job of achieving it).
- Despite their self-reported lower stress levels, a far greater proportion of Seattle residents report having been diagnosed with high blood pressure this year than last (26 percent in 2009 to 36 percent in 2010) and they report being diagnosed with depression at rates that are higher than Americans overall (23 percent vs. 14 percent).
- Of those who have had a health care provider recommend lifestyle and behavior changes, nearly three in 10 Seattle residents (29 percent) cite willpower

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Despite their self-reported lower stress levels, a far greater proportion of Seattle residents report having been diagnosed with high blood pressure this year than last, and they report being diagnosed with depression at rates that are higher than Americans overall.

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# STRESS IN SEATTLE

When asked how often they take coffee breaks to reduce stress, three in 10 Seattle residents say they take coffee breaks at least once a week to help manage stress.

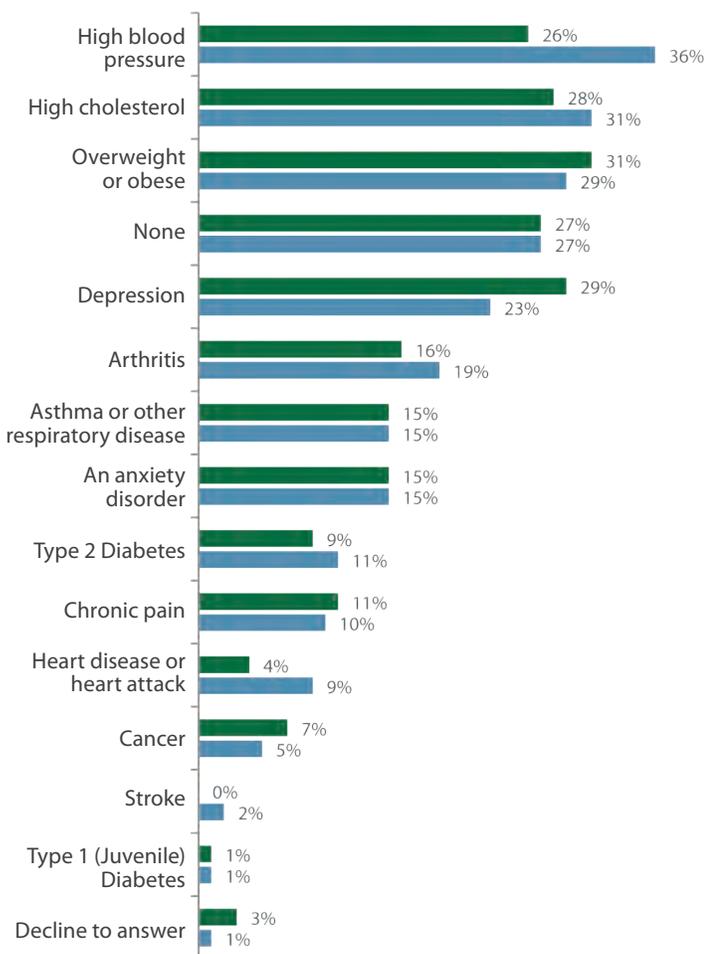
as a barrier that prevents them from making the changes. They are more likely than Americans overall to report that having more time would help them overcome their lack of willpower (54 percent vs. 34 percent).

## Take a Coffee Break

When asked how often they take coffee breaks to reduce stress, three in 10 Seattle residents say they take coffee breaks at least once a week to help manage stress.

### Health Conditions in Seattle

■ 2009 ■ 2010



BASE: Seattle residents 2009 (n=200); 2010 (n=214)  
Q2105 Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you have any of the following conditions? Please select all that apply.



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist

## STRESS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



Despite the fact that Washington, D.C.-area residents\* continued to report lower stress levels than in recent years, this decline did not translate to an increase in reports of good or excellent health. In fact, more residents of the D.C. metropolitan area reported they had been diagnosed with health problems such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes in 2010 than in 2009. Despite the increase in reported health diagnoses, D.C.-area residents were slightly more likely to say they exercise regularly than Americans overall and to routinely eat a healthy diet.

### Managing Stress in a Poor Economy

Though adults in the D.C. area report that money, work and the economy are their primary sources of stress, residents continue to report steady declines in stress over the past few years.

- On average, Washington, D.C.-area residents reported a stress level of 5.3 on a 10-point scale, lower than levels reported in 2009 (5.6) and 2008 (6.0). This level is still higher, however, than what D.C.-area residents report a “healthy” level of stress to be (3.6).
- Approximately two out of three D.C.-area residents cite money (72 percent), work (69 percent) and the economy (67 percent) as very or somewhat significant causes of stress. However, considerably more residents report money and the economy as a source of stress this year compared with last year (60 percent cited money and 56 percent cited the economy as sources of stress in 2009).
- The percentage of D.C.-area adults reporting that their stress has increased over the past five years has been steadily falling (53 percent in 2008, 47 percent in 2009 and 40 percent this year).
- D.C.-area residents are more likely to cite the economy as a cause this year than they did in 2009 (67 percent, up from 56 percent). However, these figures are in line with the national average.



The percentage (of D.C.-area adults) with type 2 diabetes has nearly doubled, from 7 percent last year to 13 percent in 2010.

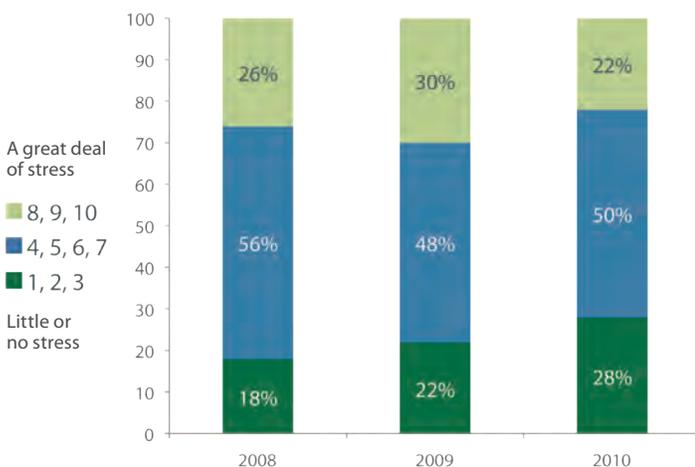
- The majority of D.C.-area residents (62 percent) report that they are doing enough to manage their stress, which exceeds what Americans in general report (55 percent of adults say they are doing enough to manage stress).

## Stress and Personal Health

Fewer D.C.-area residents rated their health as excellent/very good in 2010 than in 2009 (40 percent vs. 49 percent), and despite remaining below the national average, more D.C.-area residents report being in fair/poor health than in 2009 (14 percent vs. 11 percent). This trend may be cause for concern for residents of the Washington, D.C., area, as those rating their health as fair/poor are more likely to report physical symptoms of stress. Indeed, the percentage of D.C.-area residents reporting a diagnosis of specific chronic health problems has increased and is higher than the national average.

- More than one-third of adults report having been told they have high cholesterol (36 percent) or high blood pressure (35 percent), up from about one-quarter last year (25 percent reported high blood pressure in 2009, and 28 percent reported high cholesterol). The percentage who reported a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes has nearly doubled from 7 percent last year to 13 percent in 2010.
- At least four in 10 D.C.-area residents report having been told by a health care provider that they need to exercise more (45 percent) or lose weight (41 percent). Three in 10 have been told to switch to a healthier diet (30 percent).

### Assessment of Personal Stress in Washington, D.C.



Mean	2008	2009	2010
Mean	6.0	5.6	5.3

BASE: Washington, D.C., residents 2008 (n=250); 2009 (n=203); 2010 (n=212)  
Q605 On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means you have little or no stress and 10 means you have a great deal of stress, how would you rate your average level of stress during the past month?

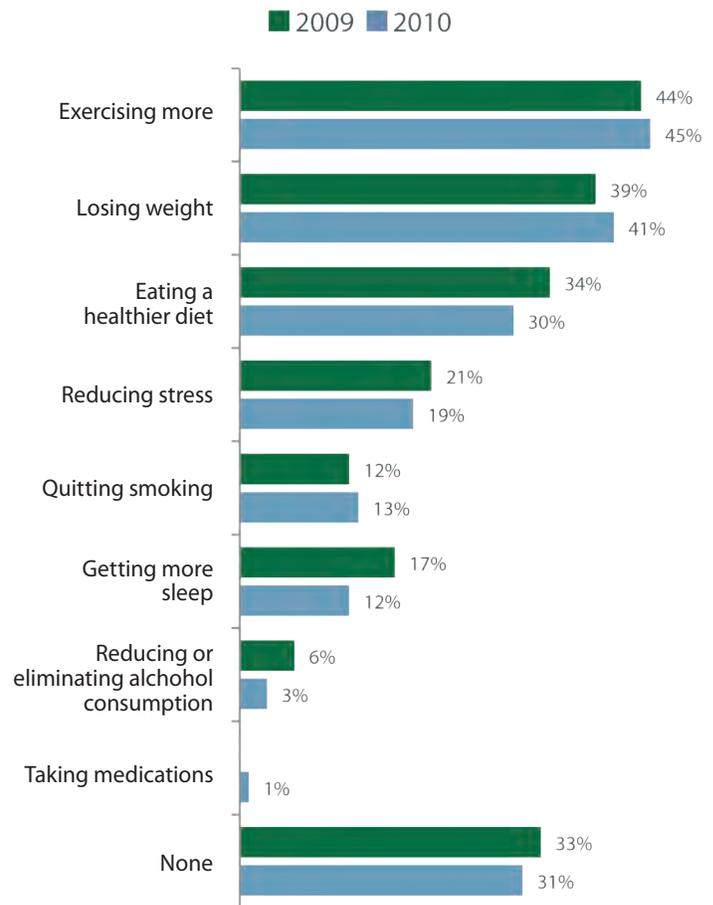
Making the kinds of lifestyle changes that lead to lasting improvements in physical and mental health is never

easy. D.C.-area residents are less likely than Americans overall to report that a lack of confidence that they can successfully change their behavior prevents them from making lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by their health care provider. Additionally, four in 10 say that nothing prevents them from making lifestyle and behavior changes recommended by their health care provider. They are increasingly less likely to report stress as a barrier preventing them from making changes but nearly a quarter report that they don't have time to make the lifestyle and behavior changes that a health care provider has recommended. Regardless, D.C.-area residents are just as likely as other Americans to report physical symptoms as a result of stress.

- D.C.-area residents are less likely to report stress as a reason for failing to make lifestyle changes than they were last year (7 percent vs. 21 percent).
- Adults in the D.C. area are less likely than Americans overall to say the reason they haven't made changes has to do with a lack of confidence (6 percent vs. 14 percent).
- 40 percent say nothing is preventing them from making changes, which is more than the percentage of those who report a lack of willpower (31 percent).
- Despite a perceived lack of barriers to change, D.C.-area residents are just as likely as other Americans to report lying awake at night (44 percent of D.C.-area residents and Americans in general say that have lain awake at night in the past month because of stress) and overeating or eating unhealthy foods (42 percent of D.C.-area residents compared with 40 percent of the general population) because of stress.

At least four in 10 D.C.-area residents report having been told by a health care provider that they need to exercise more or lose weight.

## Recommendations from Health Care Providers



BASE: Washington, D.C., residents 2009 (n=203); 2010 (n=212)  
 Q2110 Which of the following, if any, has a health care provider recommended to you in the past 5 years? Please select all that apply.

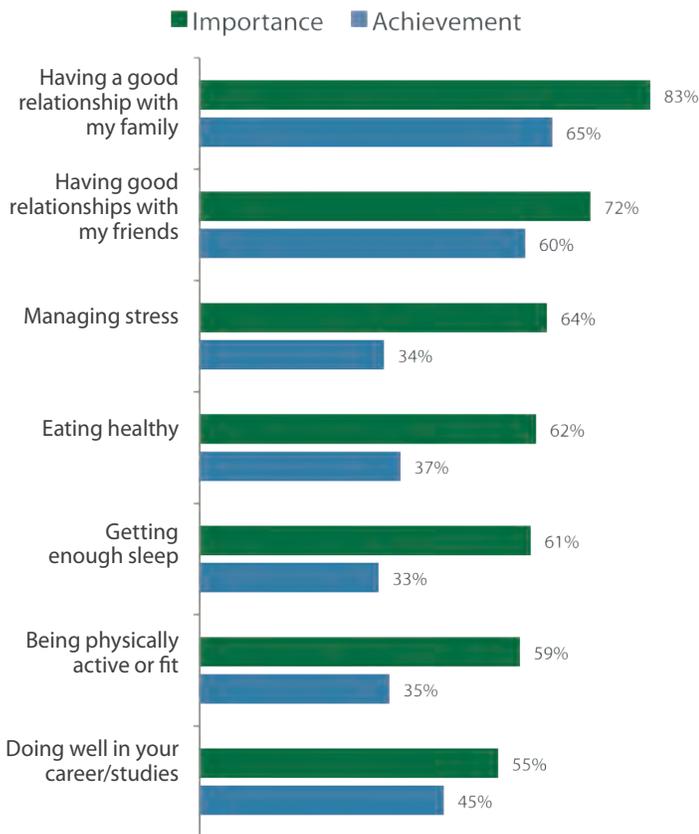


# STRESS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

More than six out of 10 D.C.-area adults say they exercise regularly — a level slightly above the national average.

- More than six out of 10 D.C.-area adults (62 percent) say they exercise regularly (a few times a week or more) — a level slightly above the national average (55 percent).
- People living in the Washington, D.C., area are more likely than Americans overall to say that willpower means being committed to making a change (23 percent vs. 13 percent).
- When asked to identify what prevents them from doing more to relieve their stress, nearly one-quarter of D.C.-area residents say that they lack the time or are too busy (22 percent).
- On every aspect of well-being evaluated in the survey, adults rated its importance higher than their ability to reach that goal, with the highest gap between importance and achievement for managing stress, followed by not getting enough sleep.

## Importance vs. Achievement for Washington, D.C., Residents



BASE: Washington, D.C., residents (n=212)  
 Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?  
 Q7010 How well are you doing at achieving each of these?

## Stress and Technology

When asked if being connected to their mobile electronic devices was a source of stress, most D.C.-area residents did not agree that this is a source of stress.

- Nearly half disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that texts, phone, e-mail and Internet added to their stress level during the day (48 percent). Only 23 percent agreed or strongly agreed that being “connected” via mobile devices made them feel stressed and overwhelmed.

### **About the Stress in America Survey**

Since 2006, the American Psychological Association has commissioned an annual nationwide survey as part of its Mind/Body Health campaign to examine the state of stress across the country and understand its impact. The Stress in America survey measures attitudes and perceptions of stress among the general public and identifies leading sources of stress, common behaviors used to manage stress and the impact of stress on our lives. The results of the survey draw attention to the serious physical and emotional implications of stress and the inextricable link between the mind and body.

### **For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist**

APA's Mind/Body Health campaign educates the public about the connection between psychological and physical health and how lifestyle and behaviors can affect overall health and wellness. This multifaceted social marketing campaign addresses resilience and the mind-body connection through the Internet, social media, strategic partnerships and a nationwide grassroots network of psychologists offering free educational programs in local communities.

### **About the American Psychological Association**

The American Psychological Association, in Washington, D.C., is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and the world's largest association of psychologists. APA's membership includes more than 150,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. Through its divisions in 54 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 60 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance psychology as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting health, education and human welfare.

