

Mental Wellness & Reproductive Health

While a little/short-term stress (**acute stress**) can help you stay alert, too much/long-term stress (**chronic stress**) can affect your mental wellness and your reproductive health.

Continue reading for more details and resources!



[Nargund, 2015](#)

What is stress?

Stress is the body's way of reacting to threats, challenges, or demands in our daily lives.



Stress is common, especially among young adults, but is often overlooked in reproductive health.



¼ of the world's population is between 10-24 years of age. In 2023, young adults (aged 15-24) made up **13%** of the population in the U.S.

Did You Know?

In the US, rates of depression in adolescents increased from **8.1% in 2009** to **15.8% in 2019**

[Fitch, 2024](#)

Common Stressors among Young Adults

- Major **life changes** (e.g., starting a new job)
- **Financial** problems (e.g., debts, unemployment)
- External **pressure** (e.g., homework, job)
- **Substance** abuse (e.g., smoking, drugs, etc.)
- **Isolation**/loneliness (e.g., living abroad, low community engagement)

[Valsamakis, 2019](#)

Sexual Health

- Reduced interest in sexual activity due to **fatigue** and anxiety
- Chronic and traumatic stress can result in **sexual dysfunction**
- Stressful environments can suppress and hinder sexual expression and lead to **negative consequences**, including infections and sexual violence

[World Health Organization](#)

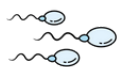
Reproductive Health

While it is challenging to prove the extent to which mental wellness and reproductive health are correlated due to inconsistent study results, evidence indicates that stress plays an important role in reproductive well-being.



Menstruation:

- Bloating, headaches, and mood swings
- Irregular menstrual cycles and insulin resistance



Sperm quality:

- Varying testosterone production
- Sperm appearance (i.e., misshapen)



Infertility:

- Decreasing lean body mass may impact ovulation and increase infertility risk
- Chronic stress can lead to erectile dysfunction and retrograde ejaculation

Mental Wellness

- **Sleep:** aim for consistent and adequate sleep
- **Exercise:** engage in regular physical activity
- **Therapy & Support:** consider professional therapy and building a support network
- **Nutrition:** maintain a healthy, sustainable diet to support your well-being
- **Community:** participate in activities that foster a sense of well-being

*Stress management looks different for everyone, so it may take time to build and implement an effective plan!

Resources & Support



[UCLA RISE Center](#)

[Be Well Bruin](#)

