

# Trauma: Stress, Abuse, Damage, Resiliency, Repair

November 2013



**Michael Cheikin MD**  
*Holistic Medicine and Physiatry*  
[www.cheikin.com](http://www.cheikin.com) 610-239-9901

Living organisms have internal mechanisms to recognize, defend and recover from stress, whereas non-living objects, such as bridges, are stressed, but need external processes. By definition, “stress” is a response to a “stressor”. From the most basic yeast, responding to a hostile bacteria (by making penicillin or alcohol), to humans running, fighting, or freezing (stillness is sometimes protective), remaining alive often equals surviving stressors.

“Eu-stress” is defined as “good” stress, such as learning a new concept or skill, where nerves or muscles grow stronger after being challenged, and is necessary for health. Alzheimer’s disease is in part caused by lack of such stimulus. “Dis-stress” means that a system is overloaded.

Stressors come in many dimensions. Chemical stressors come from the outside (exotoxins) and inside (endotoxins). Emotional stressors can also originate externally (family, school, work, money), or internally (genetic neurotransmitter imbalances, memories, thoughts). Physical stressors include accidents and overloading exercises. Deficiencies of a single critical nutrient, such as Vitamin C, can cause a stressful dis-ease (scurvy) which will only repair if the nutrient is provided.

The “stress response” has two phases: in the first, resources are mobilized to identify and remove or neutralize the stressor (running, fighting, making anti-bodies). If that succeeds, a second phase involves repair, often with an outcome stronger than the start. If the stressor is on-going (such as toxins or sleep deprivation), or there are insufficient resources to complete the repair, then getting stuck in a perpetual stress-avoidance-repair loop can occur. This is a major component of chronic illness.

“Trauma” implies a significant magnitude of response. Two people can be exposed to the same stressor, one experiencing life-altering trauma, the other experiencing nothing. Traumas can be a single large event (911) or a series of small events (school, families, illnesses, etc.). Traumatic events are highly individual, based on age, sex, perception, beliefs, genetics, pre-natal factors, health, support systems, etc.

“Abuse” implies intention, knowledge or negligence by the creator of a stressor. Parents, teachers, priests, corporations and countries are all capable of abuse. Self-abuse and environmental abuse are rampant.

“Damage” occurs when stressor(s) cause disruption of structure or function. Like the lanes on a bridge, we have multiple functions. Damage can cause the limitation of lane (slower or less volume), the closing of one or more lanes, or the closing of the bridge (death). Depending upon the degree of damage, sometimes the structure or function cannot be fully restored-- a scar or dys-function remains.

“Resiliency” refers to the capacity to respond to a stressor, like a spring. A car’s shock-absorbers protect its

other parts and occupants from bumps in the road. In many ways “youth” is characterized by resiliency--the ability to withstand substantial abuse (physical, emotional, chemical, and self) without scarring or wrinkling. Aging of a shock-absorber, bridge or human implies loss of resiliency. “Youthing” and healing involve the repair of resiliency.

Biochemicals involved in repair are prioritized over those for detoxification or sex hormone production—survival is prioritized until procreation can occur—muscles and other tissues are sacrificed if there are insufficient materials. Observing which structures and functions are working well, or not, are important clues to what is needed for repair. “Symptoms”, i.e. the subjective information

provided by the body’s wisdom, often provide important clues. The persistence of a stress response, whether experienced as anxiety, irritability or reactivity, poor concentration, sleep disruption, immune dysfunction, mal-digestion or the inability to heal a tendon or lens (cataract) suggest a deficiency or block that often can be found.

Most of our cells have receptors for opioids and cannabinoids, which are naturally occurring substances. Using internal (yoga, exercise) and external sources can help manage stress and improve survival in the short-term, or can be abused.

“Post Traumatic Stress Disorder” (“PTSD”) is a condition where the body-mind is stuck in a loop. We all have a certain amount of PTSD, or stuckness, based on our childhoods. As listed above, multiple factors are involved in its causation and healing. Combining biochemical and mind-body techniques, such as improved nutrition, special supplements, sleep, recreation, humor, service to others, detoxification, EMDR, yoga, acupuncture and spirituality can be

highly effective.

## IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. **This educational material may not be used to influence medical care without supervision by a licensed practitioner.**
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3. Dr. Cheikin’s website has extensive references and related articles on “Stress”, “Adrenal Fatigue” “Detoxification” and others.

Michael Cheikin MD is a holistic physician, Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (“Physiatry”), Pain Management, Spinal Cord Medicine and Electrodiagnostic Medicine and licensed in Medical Acupuncture. Dr. Cheikin has extensively studied yoga, diet and metabolism, Ayurvedic, Chinese and energy medicine and other alternative modalities for over 30 years. He specializes in obscure, chronic and severe problems that have not responded satisfactorily to other methods of healing. 610-239-9901 or [www.cheikin.com](http://www.cheikin.com) 11/30/13-9 ...aj.doc

## TRAUMA EFFECTS:

### Functions

- Repair
- Immune
- Digestion
- Memory
- Concentration
- Emotion
- Social Awareness & Connection
- Movement
- Sexual and Procreative

### Structures

- Cells and Organelles (DNA, mitochondria, membranes, hormone receptors, etc)
- Brain and Nervous System
- Sensory Systems (eyes, ears)
- Immune System: Cells, Lymph Nodes
- Digestive System
- Connective Tissues (Skin, Hair, Organs)
- Muscles, Joints, Tendons, Ligaments