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The One Thing Most Of Us Are Stressed About

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Nearly three-quarters of adults say they re stressed about this factor. (Photo: Getty Images)

Even with the U.S. economy on the rebound, Americans are more stressed out about money than ever, and the financial strain is harming the nation s health.

The American Psychological Association s [Stress in America](#) survey results for 2014, released this week, shows that 72 percent of adults report feeling stressed about money at least some of the time, and 22 percent say that they experience extreme stress about money. Top reported triggers include paying for unexpected expenses, paying for essentials, and saving for retirement.

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While money generally stresse

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the survey finds that the hardest hit, stress-wise, are parents, millennials, Gen X-ers, and lower-income households (those bringing in less than \$50,000 per year). In other words: anyone besides wealthy Baby Boomers without children to support.

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Women shoulder much of the burden. Far more women than men say they have lain awake at night in the past month due to stress (51 percent, compared with 32 percent of men).

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For the first time, the annual report shows a disturbing trend: All of this financial strain is negatively affecting Americans health. Parents are more likely than nonparents to report engaging in unhealthy stress-management techniques, such as drinking alcohol and smoking. And 32 percent of adults say that their lack of money prevents them from living a healthy lifestyle, while 12 percent report skipping going to the doctor because of financial concerns. Almost a third of adults with partners (31 percent) report that money is a major source of conflict in their relationships.

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There is some good news: Stress as a whole is trending downward, with lower overall levels reported now than in 2007. But that stress is still way too high. “Despite the good news that overall stress levels are down, it appears that the idea of living with stress higher than what we believe to be healthy and dealing with it in ineffective ways continues to be embedded in our culture,” Norman B. Anderson, PhD, CEO and executive vice president of the American Psychological Association, says in a statement.



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Chronic stress is directly linked to myriad health issues, including high blood pressure, ulcers, irritable bowl syndrome, headaches, and depression. As difficult as it is to find a way to relieve the mind when life is a pressure cooker of stress, taking a moment to care for oneself is incredibly important. Studies repeatedly show that one of the best ways to reduce stress is with exercise, which lowers stress hormone levels in your body

and it doesn't mean spending hours at a gym every day. Experts agree: Even a simple walk around the block for a few minutes can do a world of good for the body and mind.

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