

5.1 Introduction to Health Psychology

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 20 marks

KEY WORDS general adaptation syndrome 一般适应综合征 • stress 压力 • stressor 应激源
• emotion-focused 情绪聚焦 • resistance 抵抗期

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **stress** 压力 and health.

You must be able to:

- distinguish a **stressor** 应激源 from the **stress response** 应激反应
- describe the phases of the **general adaptation syndrome** 一般适应综合征
- contrast **problem-focused** 问题聚焦 and **emotion-focused** 情绪聚焦 coping
- state how **social support** 社会支持 and **perceived control** 控制感 affect health

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Stressor and response

A **stressor** is the event; the **stress response** is the body's reaction to it. The same event is not equally stressful to everyone, because appraisal intervenes between the two.

■ General adaptation syndrome

Alarm: arousal mobilises resources. **Resistance:** arousal is sustained. **Exhaustion:** resources deplete and vulnerability to illness rises. The health cost comes from prolonged resistance, not from brief alarm.

■ Two coping strategies

Problem-focused coping changes the stressor, and works best where the situation is controllable. **Emotion-focused** coping manages the reaction, and is more appropriate where it is not.

■ Support and control

Strong social support and a sense of control over events are both associated with better health outcomes. Both reduce the appraisal of threat, which is where the physiological response begins.

2 Practice

2.1 State the difference between a stressor and the stress response. [2]

2.2 Name the three phases of the general adaptation syndrome. [3]

2.3 A person cannot change a situation but reframes how they think about it.

(a) Name the coping strategy. [1]

(b) State when it is the better choice. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The health damage from chronic stress arises mainly in [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** the alarm phase
 - B** prolonged resistance and exhaustion
 - C** a single stressful event
 - D** emotion-focused coping

3.2 Problem-focused coping is most effective when the stressor is [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** uncontrollable
 - B** controllable
 - C** imaginary
 - D** brief

3.3 Two employees face the same workload; one reports far more stress.

- (a) State what explains the difference. [1]
- (b) Explain one workplace change that could reduce it. [2]

3.4 Applied research task. Adults kept a diary of daily stressors and had blood samples taken monthly for a year. Those reporting many small daily hassles showed more illness than those reporting one major life event. A second finding: people who described their workload as “a challenge” showed lower stress hormones than those who described the same workload as “a threat”.

- (a) Name the three stages of Selye’s general adaptation syndrome, and state what happens in each. [3]

- (b) Explain how the second finding shows that stress depends on appraisal as well as on the stressor. [2]

- (c) Distinguish problem-focused from emotion-focused coping, and state which is more useful for a stressor that cannot be changed. [2]

- (d) Explain **one** limitation of using self-reported diaries as the measure of stress. [1]
