Stress is a well-known cause of chronic disease and health problems such as: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, cancer and infectious disease, obesity and metabolic syndrome, substance abuse, chronic pain, and psychiatric distress.

Stressors include: work, financial burdens, childcare, childhood trauma, unemployment, interpersonal conflict, emotional isolation.

Stress and environmental influences, genetic vulnerability and lack of medical access are the major factors contributing to staggering health care costs.

Poor lifestyle choices and bad habits increase the risk of chronic disease. Examples of these bad habits include: overeating comfort food, smoking, drinking too much, and inactivity.

The Missing Link

Changing lifestyle & bad habits is an enormous challenge

There is now evidence to show that stress encourages addictive behaviors, bad habits and other poor lifestyle choices by disrupting critical brain functions such as self-control, decision making and normal healthy desire.

For example, everyday choices include:

- Having a cheeseburger instead of a salad
- Smoking a cigarette instead of taking a walk
- Going to a bar instead of seeking support

Stress increases the risk of these choices becoming bad habits, which in turn, increases the risk of chronic disease.

Breaking the link between stress & bad habits will decrease the risk of developing chronic diseases.

The Science of Stress, Bad Habits, and Risk of Chronic Disease

Yale Stress Center Can Help Build a Healthy Lifestyle

- Consultation to develop prevention and treatment programs that target stress
- Development of strategies to decrease stress and increase healthy choices in professional, clinical and education settings
- Training and supervision on stress management and controlling bad habits
- Individual evaluation

Source material and references can be viewed at Yale Stress Center’s website: yalestress.org/sources.html