

# How Much Stress Can You Cope With?

Basic Concepts

Do you remember the Titanic? 2200 people went into the icy North Atlantic waters, but only 700 people survived the night. Why?



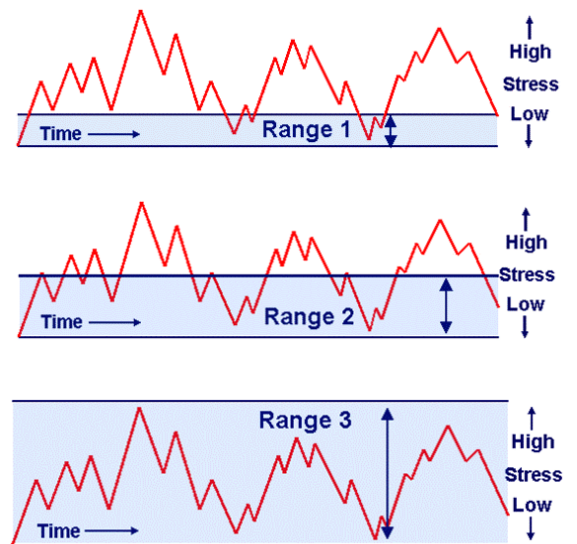
## What is Stress and how does our body Adapt to it?

Stresses are changes in your internal or external environment that require changes in your body in order for your body to adapt successfully. What makes adaptation to stress possible? Gray's Anatomy says that **“it is the purpose of the brain and nervous system to control and coordinate the function of all the tissues and organs of the body and to adapt them to the environment.”** Adaptation is possible because you have a nervous system. Let's use a simple example of a change in your environment. Imagine walking into a very cold room. How does your brain become aware that the temperature is suddenly very cold? Sensory nerves signal the brain of the temperature change. Your brain analyzes and processes that information. Is the cold temperature a potential danger to your health and survival? Of course, we all know about hypothermia. The brain then sends signals through your autonomic nerves to the glands of the skin to produce “goose bumps” which insulate your body from heat loss. The brain also sends signals through your motor nerves to your muscles to produce “shivering” which produces heat. The nervous system responded to the stress of cold and adapted by providing mechanisms that would ensure the health and survival of your body.

## What is your Range of Adaptability to Stress?

Dr. Hans Selye, a pioneer of modern stress research, explained that we each have a range of adaptability to stress. Our ability to adapt to stress is managed by our nervous system. Even though we may be born with an inherently wide range of adaptability, that range can become narrowed. If our nervous system is disturbed by subluxation, our ability and potential to adapt to stress is diminished progressively.

Note the diagrams below. The “squiggly” red line that looks like the Dow Jones Average represents the stress in a normal life over time. The time could be a day, a month, a year, or a whole lifetime. The peaks are events or times of high stress; the valleys are times of lower stress. The dark blue parallel lines in each diagram represent three different ranges of adaptability to stress. In **Range 1** you will see that stress greatly exceeds that person's ability to cope most of the time. What kind of health problems do these people develop? They can develop serious, debilitating health problems like cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. In **Range 2** the stress levels occasionally exceed, for a short time, their ability to adapt or cope. What kind of health problems do people in Range 2 develop? They can develop annoying, chronic health problems like back pain, neck pain, headaches, digestive problems, breathing problems, allergies, and numbness and tingling. The people in **Range 3** experience the same stress as the other two people, but their range of adaptability is so wide that stress has little or no effect on their health.



Which range are you? Are you widening your range of adaptability or narrowing it?

Who were the 700 passengers who went into the icy North Atlantic water and were able to survive the ordeal? They were the ones who had the widest range of adaptability.

**Chiropractic doesn't take stress out of your life...**

**it expands your ability to adapt to stress without having it break your body down.**

How long would you like to have the widest range of adaptability possible?

Edison Chiropractic  
Wellness Center  
Dr. Sean T. Edison  
105 S. Pearl Street  
Tecumseh, MI 49286  
423-WELL

**Subluxations reduce your ability to adapt to stress  
producing a downward spiral in your health and vitality.**