

IBD INFORMATION FORUM

# FLARE-UPS: MANAGING STRESS AND ANXIETY

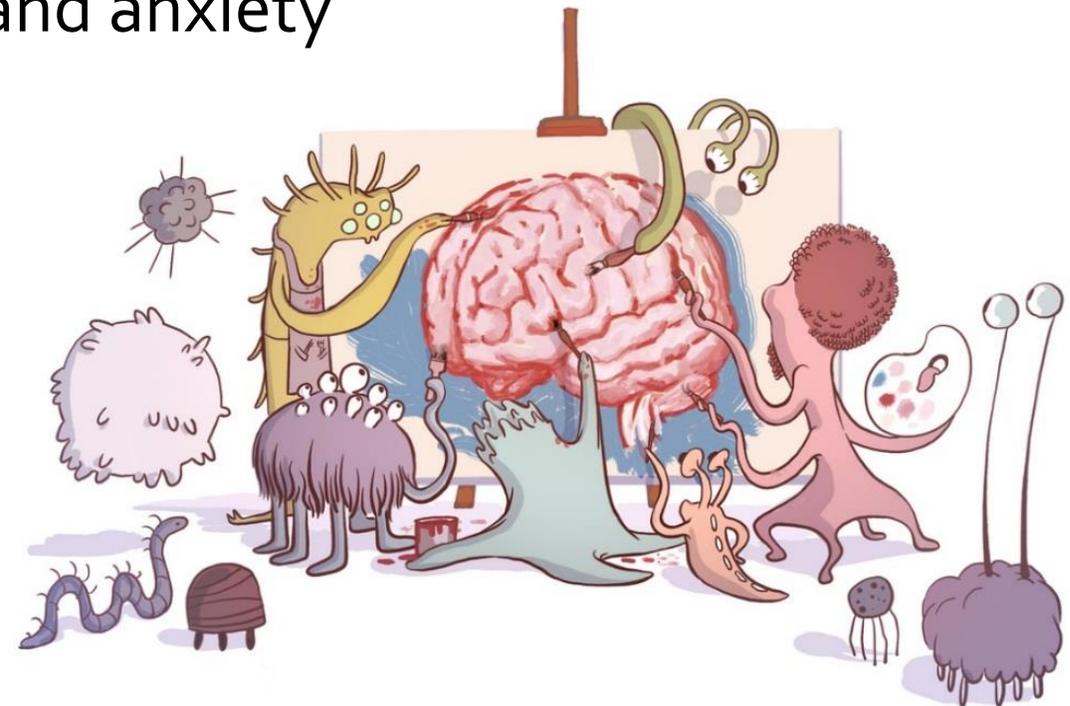
---

Jetlyn Payne

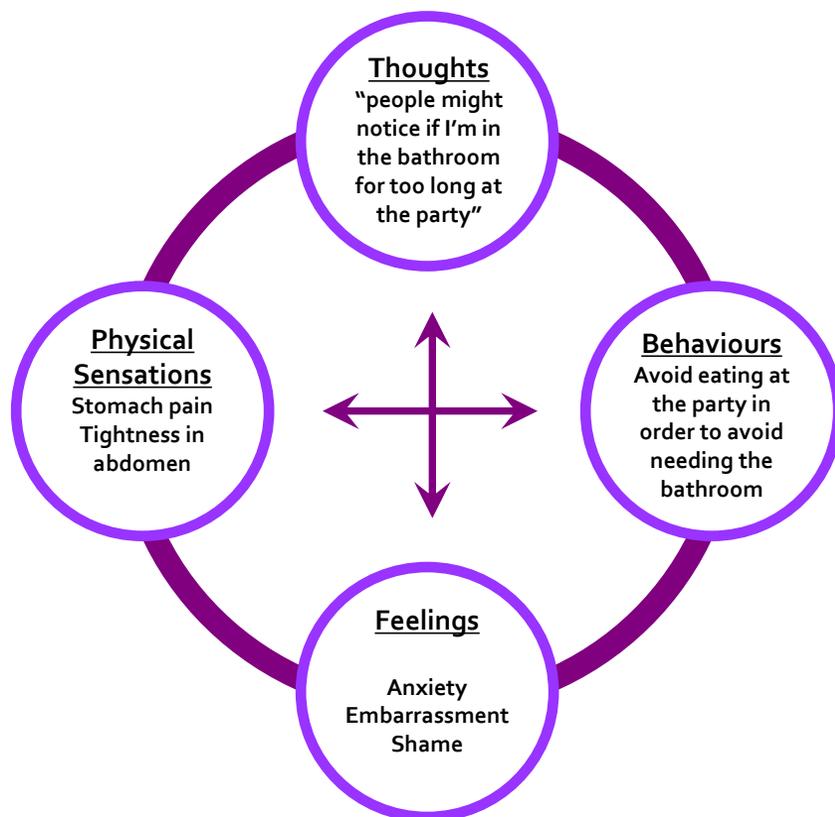
Psychologist (Clinical Registrar)

# Overview

- ❖ Mind-body integration
- ❖ Connection between IBD and stress/anxiety
- ❖ Recognising symptoms of stress and anxiety
- ❖ Managing stress and anxiety



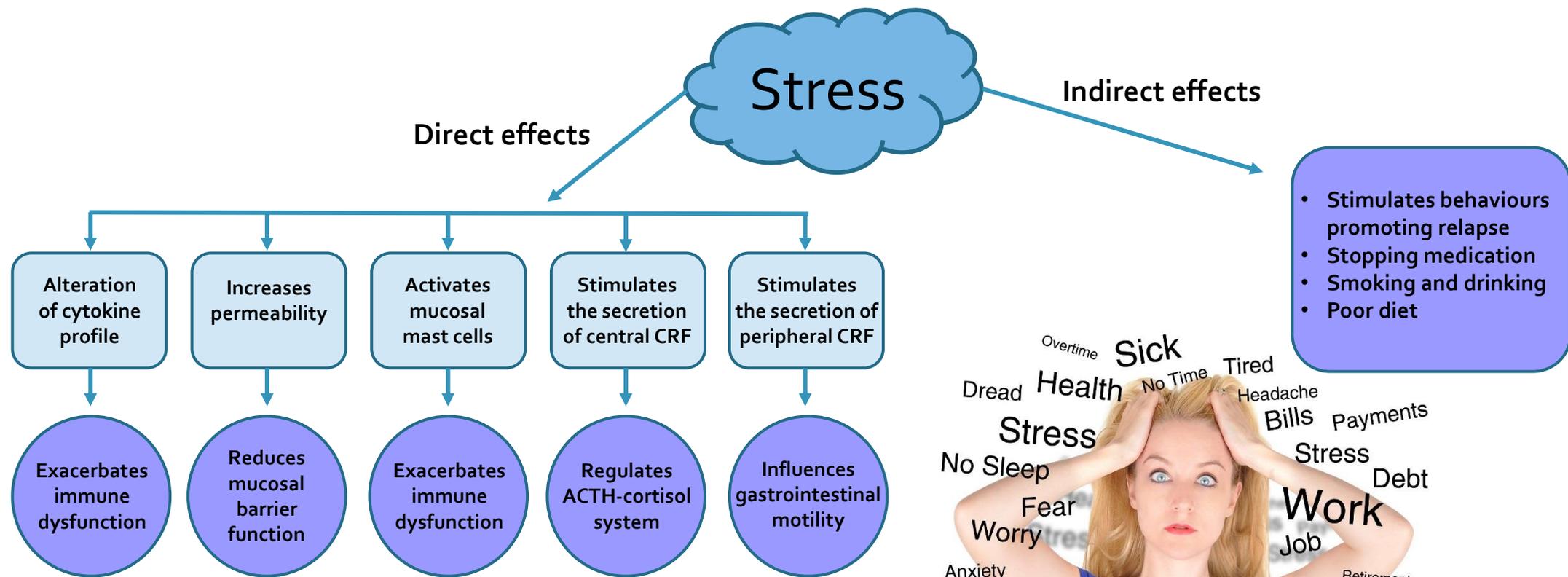
# Mind-Body Integration



- ❖ Our **thoughts, feelings and behaviours** are all connected and influence one another.

"In mind-body medicine, the mind and body are not seen as separately functioning entities, but as one functioning unit. The mind and emotions are viewed as influencing the body, as the body, in turn, influences the mind and emotions" (Selhub, 2007)

# Effect of Stress



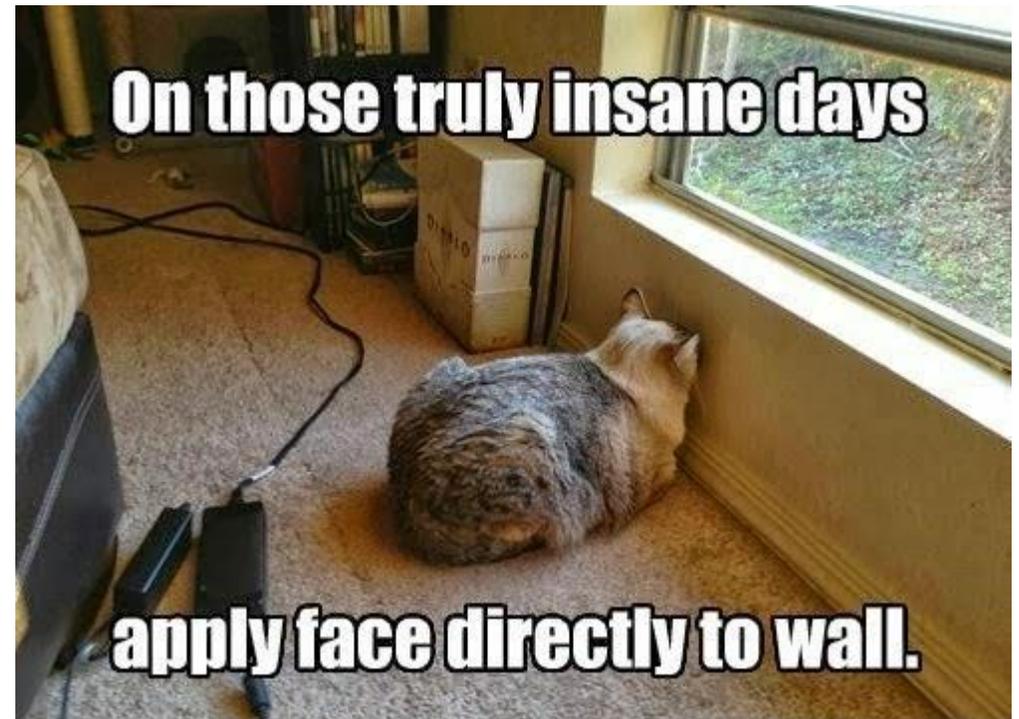
Source: Sajadinejad, Asgari, Molavi, Kalantari and Adibi (2012)

# Recognising Symptoms of Stress

- ❖ What is *helpful* stress?
- ❖ What is *unhelpful* stress?

## Feeling Irritable or Angry?

You may be more easily upset when under increased stress, such as when dealing with a new diagnosis or adjusting to ongoing stress of a chronic illness.



# Recognising Symptoms of Anxiety

Over the past *two weeks* how often have been bothered by the following issues?

- ❖ Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge
- ❖ Not being able to stop or control worrying
- ❖ Worrying too much about different things
- ❖ Trouble relaxing
- ❖ Being so restless that it is hard to sit still
- ❖ Being easily annoyed or irritable
- ❖ Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen

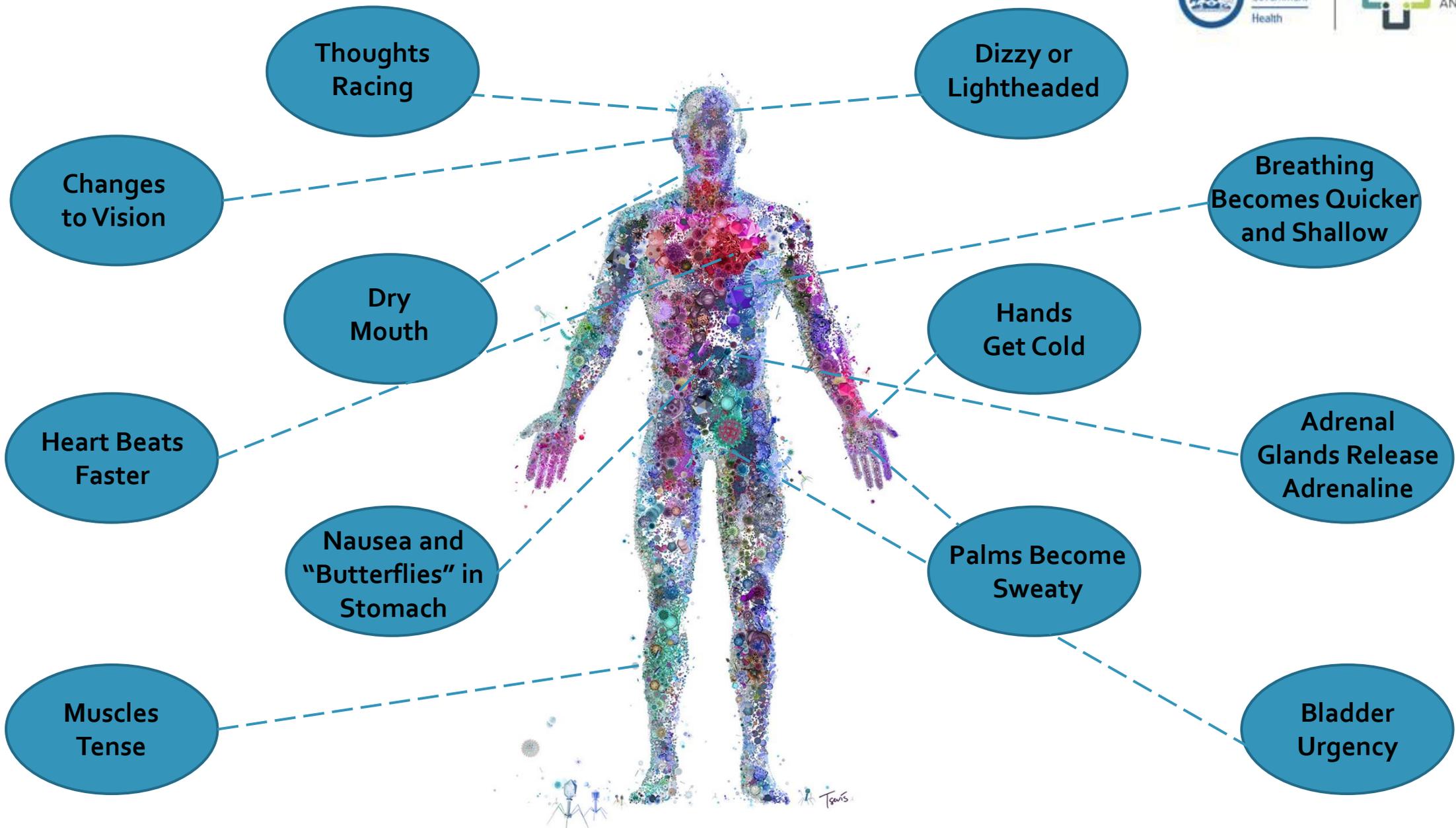
Source: beyondblue



# Fight-or-Flight Response

- ❖ The fight-or-flight response (also called hyperarousal, or the acute stress response) is an automatic physiological reaction that occurs in response to a *perceived* harmful event, attack, or threat to survival. It prepares the body to take action.





# Managing Stress and Anxiety



- ❖ **Focus on making changes with yourself** – we have more control over our own reactions than the reactions of others.
- ❖ **Change your physical response to stress through relaxation** – e.g. leisure time, specific relaxation and breathing exercises or meditation.
- ❖ **Regular exercise** – make sure to pace yourself as needed.
- ❖ **Be aware of unhelpful habits** – e.g. always rushing, taking on too much work, getting upset at trivial things.
- ❖ **Identify your triggers of stress and anxiety.**
- ❖ **Understand all you can about your illness.**

# Thank you for listening!

## Resources

- Beyond Blue. Retrieved from: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety>
- Brzozowski, Bartosz, Mazur-Bialy, Agnieszka, Pajdo, Robert, Kwiecien, Slawomir, Bilski, Jan, Zwolinska-Wcislo, Malgorzata, . . . Brzozowski, Tomasz. (2016). Mechanisms by which Stress Affects the Experimental and Clinical Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD): Role of Brain-Gut Axis. *Current Neuropharmacology*, 14(8), 892-900.
- Crohns and Colitis. Retrieved from: <https://www.crohnsandcolitis.com.au>
- Jedel, S., Hankin, V., Voigt, R., & Keshavarzian, A. (2012). Addressing the mind, body, and spirit in a gastrointestinal practice for inflammatory bowel disease patients. *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology : The Official Clinical Practice Journal of the American Gastroenterological Association*, 10(3), 244-6.
- Sajadinejad, Asgari, Molavi, Kalantari, & Adibi (2012). "Psychological Issues in Inflammatory Bowel Disease: An Overview," *Gastroenterology Research and Practice*, vol. 2012, Article ID 106502, 11 pages, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2012/106502>.
- Selhub, E. (2007). Mind-body medicine for treating depression. *Alternative & Complementary Therapies*, 2, 4-9. doi: 10.1089/act2007.13107