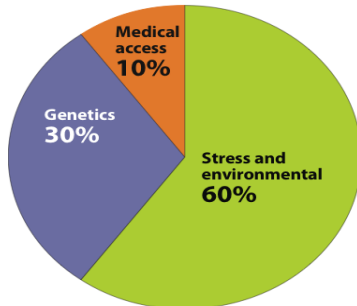


## THE SCIENCE OF STRESS, BAD HABITS, AND CHRONIC DISEASE

As a recovery-oriented healthcare agency, DMHAS must consider the overall wellness of the people we serve. Research shows that there is a clear link between physical and mental health and that stress adversely affects both. Research also shows that individuals with serious mental health and substance use disorders are impacted by chronic disease and die at a younger age than the general population. DMHAS' strong academic partnership with Yale University helps to create programs that support recovery and wellness. One of those points of partnership is with the **Yale Stress Center**.

**Factors that contribute to healthcare costs**



The National Institute on Health funded a large collaborative team science grant to understand and treat stress, bad habits and chronic diseases. **Stress is a well-known cause of chronic disease** 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, and emotional isolation. **Stress and environmental influences, genetic vulnerability and lack of medical access are major factors contributing to staggering health care costs.**

### BREAKING THE LINK

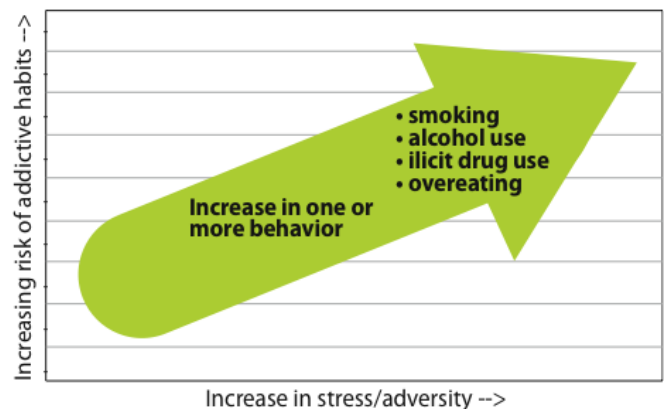
Changing lifestyle and bad habits is an enormous challenge. **Stress encourages addictive behaviors, bad habits and other poor lifestyle choices by disrupting critical brain functions** such as self-control, decision making and normal healthy desire. Examples of everyday health choices include:

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

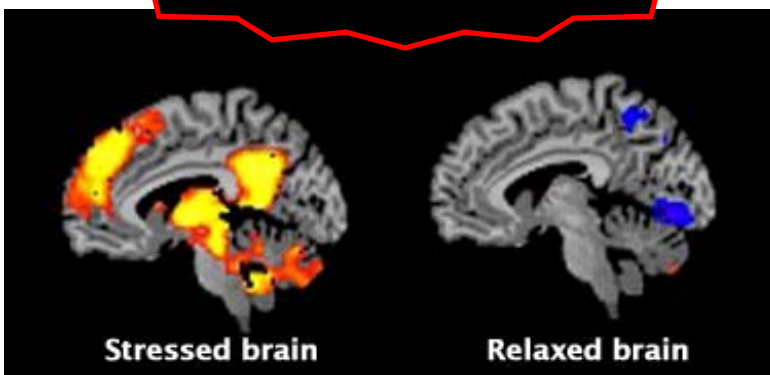
Stress increases the risk of these choices becoming bad habits, which in turn, increases the risk of chronic disease.

**Poor lifestyle choices and bad habits increase the risk of chronic disease**

**Link between stress and bad habits**



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



### Yale Stress Center Helps Build a Healthy Lifestyle

- ▶ Consultation to develop prevention and treatment programs that target stress
- ▶ Strategy development 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 and treatment