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Which stress matters? The examination of temporal aspects of stress.

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Source

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Abstract

In this study, the impact of past experiences, present stressors, and expectations of future stress on psychological distress were explored. Participants were 38 male and 41 female spouses of patients hospitalized with non-life-threatening diseases. Participants completed questionnaires on which they appraised past, present, and future stressors and described their levels of psychological distress. Five models of the relationships between appraisals of past, present, and future stressors with psychological distress were examined. Only one model was confirmed by the data. It suggests that an appraisal of past stressors affects the appraisal of present stressors only indirectly, through its effect on the appraisal of future stressors. This model also maintains that only the appraisal of present stressors affects psychological distress directly. The implications of these findings for stress research are discussed.

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