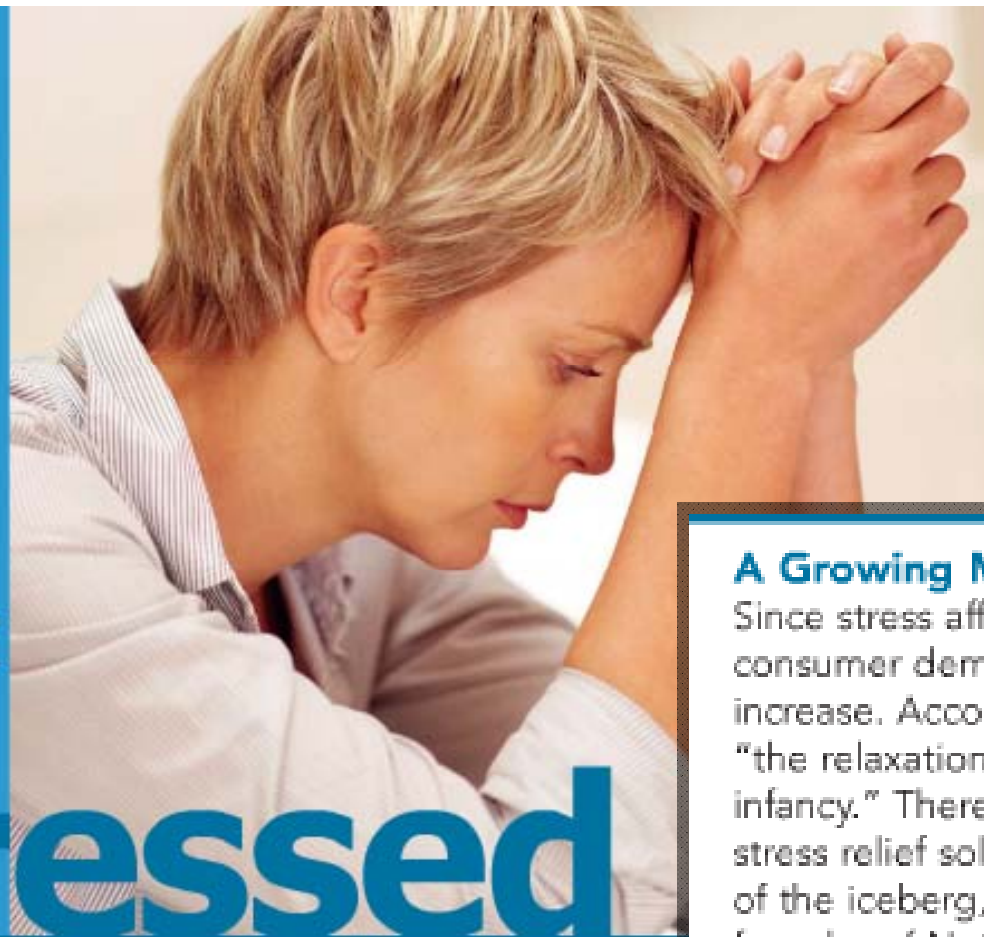


With seemingly everyone being stressed out these days, natural product manufacturers are working hard to help consumers reduce their worries.

BY RAJIV LEVENTHAL

Support for the Stressed



There is no denying that stress is all around us. The National Health Interview Survey found that 75 percent of the general population experiences at least "some stress" every two weeks, and half of those people experience moderate or high levels of stress during the same period. And according to the World Health Organization, stress is America's No. 1 health problem.

Additionally, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that stress costs U.S. industry more than \$300 billion annually because of the lost hours due to absenteeism, reduced productivity and workers' com-

penetration claims, which many refer to as an "economic catastrophe." Further, the American Psychological Association states that stress is linked to the six leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver and suicide.

Our modern lifestyles are rife with potentially stress-inducing activities including excessive multitasking, meals in front of computers and, for many, financial and work related circumstances, said Julie Dennis, National Science Educator at Source Naturals®/Planetary® Herbs (Scotts Valley, CA). "Stress disrupts nearly every system in your body. It can trigger free-radical attack, adrenal depletion,

suppress immune response and sleep disorders. It can even rewire the brain, leaving you more vulnerable to depression."

Whether it's daily stressors, such as traffic jams or constantly growing "to-do" lists, or more life-shaping stressful events, like finances or illness, marketing director of Nelson, Bach Original Flower Remedies and the RESCUE brand of products (North Andover, MA). "It's how we manage the stress that determines the toll that stress takes on our lives. Many techniques, including breathing exercises, physical exercise and meditation can help us deal with stress and its impact."

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A Growing Market

Since stress affects so many people, consumer demand has continued to increase. According to bevnnet.com, "the relaxation category is still in its infancy." Therefore, the market for stress relief solutions is simply at the tip of the iceberg, said Leslie Barber, co-founder of Nutrabella (San Mateo, CA). In a *New York Times* article "Skip the Scotch, Just Have a Swig of Mellowberry," published on July 2, 2010, research company IBISWorld predicted that the stress relief industry is expected to generate \$500 million in sales revenue this year, which is a year-over-year increase of about 327 percent.