

# The Surprising Link Between Stress and Memory

## VOCABULARY

- \* **Ataraxia** – calmness or peace of mind; emotional tranquility
- \* **Hippocampus** – an area of cerebral cortex that forms a ridge in the floor of the lateral ventricle of the brain, which in cross section has the shape of a sea horse. It functions as part of the limbic system
- \* **Amygdala** – an almond-shaped part, such as a tonsil or a lobe of the cerebellum
- \* **Synaptic** – of or relating to synapse → *(one of the points in the nervous system at which a signal passes from one nerve cell to another)*
- \* **Prefrontal** – situated in, involving, or relating to the foremost part of the frontal lobe of the brain
- \* **Cortex** – the outer layer of the brain or another organ
- \* **Corticosteroids** – any of the steroid hormones secreted by the adrenal cortex

## COMPREHENSION

1. What do corticosteroids do?
2. What shouldn't you do to help stay calm and collected when it matters most?
3. What part of the brain is not a key player in our memory for facts?
4. Which are the three main steps to process of memorizing facts?
5. How does stress affect the three stages of memory?
6. Why doesn't some stress help us to remember facts?

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7. How can exercising regularly affect your memory when taking a test?

## LET'S TALK

1. Why do you think our memory performs well under controlled amounts of stress but then gets worse as stress levels rise?
2. Mention an experience in which stress affected your memory.