

**Scenario #3:
Experiencing Stress or Emotional Health Issues**

Scenario	Advice-giving Approach	Patient-centered Approach
Mr. Chen presents for an employment physical and alludes to having some stress lately both at work and at home. He is vague or uncertain about what is causing him to feel stressed. Further, he says he doesn't know how to make any changes to address it.	You complete the physical Mr. Chen came in for and remind him that stress is harmful so he should try to relax.	Ask questions to reveal that Mr. Chen works long hours because of a demanding boss and is having some challenges with his teenage son. Discuss different ideas for dealing with his work and home life. Offer to refer him for family counseling. Suggest using physical activity as a way to not only release tension (i.e. stress reliever) but to improve his mood and increase energy. You discuss ways he can fit small doses of activity into his busy life and he decides to go to the onsite fitness center during his lunch hour instead of working through it. Suggesting a walk on occasion with his son might also be a good way to improve communication and gain more activity. You ask him to return in 2 to 3 months or sooner if he does not begin to feel better.

AIM-HI Rationale By suggesting the patient not only look at environmental factors that are impacting the patient's life – suggesting ways to include activity in short bouts throughout the day rather than one extended period and also to incorporate more time to communicate with his son in a non-confrontational venue.

Group Discussion

Discuss ways to approach patients who have issues affecting their emotional well-being

Using the AIM-HI Inventory to facilitate the process

To individualize your approach with the patient, the AIM-HI Inventory offers a patient snapshot of some key aspects: what areas of their lifestyle they may be interested in talking about and how ready they may be to make a change(s).

Challenges & Barriers

What are common barriers you might need ask about or address? What questions could you ask to identify potential or existing challenges or obstacles for the patient?

What other considerations could affect the patient's understanding of his health or readiness to make changes? (Example: cultural background, living/work environment, safety issues, significant life events) How could you address these?

Key Questions: The Past, Present and Future

Build on the information from the patient's AIM-HI Inventory to engage in a conversation that moves the patient toward action. Based on the example given above, what else do you want to know?

Past: What kind of questions might you pose to the patient about his past in terms of emotional well-being?

Present: How can you determine if the patient is willing to make any lifestyle changes related to his emotional well-being at this time? What could you ask or say that might help move the patient from willingness to action?

Future: How will you help the patient recognize his motivation and determine his goal(s) and action steps? How can you help him establish realistic goal(s)?

Role-Play Examples

Review the following patient scenarios. Discuss how you could approach patients in an AIM-HI patient-centered approach versus an advice-giving approach.

1. Patient who has come in for headaches, and has some work/life balance issues.
2. Patient who has 4 children under the age of seven and complains of feeling overwhelmed and is having trouble making time for herself.
3. Patient who was laid off from his job and has been unemployed for two months. He is having trouble sleeping and feels tired all the time.
4. Patient who is on medications that are really helping for depression but is gaining weight and can't decide which is worse.

Approaching the Patient

Given the role-play examples for stress and emotional health issues provided, review the following:

- How might the patient-centered approach offer a more effective dialogue than an advice-giving approach?
- What might you be willing to share with a patient about your own lifestyle choices? How could this influence the discussion?
- How might the patient express his interest in the conversation?
- What may make the patient more or less comfortable in the situation?
- What might make the patient more likely to take action?

Key AIM-HI Tools

Use the AIM-HI Fitness Prescription to record the patient's specific goals. Write down the opportunities, dose and benefits for one or more areas (physical activity, nutrition, emotional well-being).

If the patient is willing to track the choices he makes daily regarding physical activity, nutrition or emotional well-being, offer him the AIM-HI Food & Activity Journal.

This patient might benefit from Appendix Q (Stress).

Next Steps: Follow Up Plan

How will you wrap up the conversation? What next steps and commitment could you elicit from the patient?

What relevant referrals could you offer the patient?

Identify how you could use the AIM-HI tools to assess progress in future visits?