

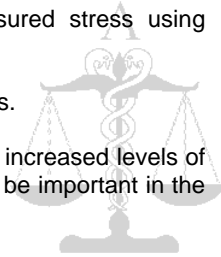
CG Ohlson et al. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*. September-October (2001) Vol.70 p 268.

Correlations between stress and organic signs, if specific to stress, would be useful in the study of stress and could be used as part of a health surveillance programme. Blood levels of hormones, such as cortisol, have been associated with the experience of stress, some research continues to determine if each hormone can be associated with a particular cause of stress, e.g. overwork.

This study measured blood composition among non-manual workers and measured stress using Karasek's demand-control model.

The work did not differentiate between chronic and acute perceptions related to stress.

Emotional strain correlated with prolactin. Strong social support also correlated with increased levels of prolactin! [Prolactin is usually associated with the production of breast milk and may be important in the development of breast tissue in early pregnancy].



#### Comment

Although this was not a particularly strong study it highlights a generic problem with stress research. Karasek's model of stressor balances (high control negates the ill effects of high demand) has been shown to correlate with heart disease, but is clear that this result should not be over interpreted. Generalisations about stress should not be made from one stress measure and one outcome.

Specific objective outcomes for specific measures of stress, remain elusive.

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