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Most Denverites stressed, survey indicates

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Chill out, Denver.

An American Psychological Association report released today suggests 75 percent of metro residents are stressed out.

The finding surprised Dr. Stephanie Smith, a clinical psychologist in Erie and public education coordinator for the Colorado Psychological Association.

"I always thought we were a laidback city," she said.

Denver isn't the most stressed city in America, but ranked ahead of the national curve in several categories, according to the report, "Stress in America."

The survey gauged angst in eight cities, but does not rank them, a spokeswoman said.

The report is based on surveys of 202 metro residents between July 21 through Aug. 4.

More than one-third of Denver residents said their stress was "extreme," compared to 24 percent in that range nationally.

Eighty percent said work stressed them out, compared to 69 percent nationally.

Job stability worried 53 percent of metro respondents, compared to 44 percent nationally.

About half of metro respondents said their stress had worsened in the previous year, a period marked by a presidential election, an economic downturn and a hyperbolic healthcare debate.

Smith said people under duress can "do little things" to head off big health problems.

"Take a walk for 10 minutes at the end of the day," she suggested. "Call a friend once a week and vent. Turn off the computer once in awhile. Take a yoga course once a week. You don't have to change your whole life."

The report is available at <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=200>.

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