

Travelers expect free, fast Wi-Fi

By Susan Stellin, New York Times

Travelers hitting the road with their mobile electronic devices have three questions about staying connected away from home: will there be Wi-Fi, how much will it cost and how well will it work?

Increasingly, it is that last question that matters most.

Hotels, airports and airlines are struggling to keep up with customers streaming movies on their tablets and hosting online meetings on their laptops, with varying degrees of success. While hoteliers and airport authorities have been fighting the bandwidth battle for years, airlines are still installing Wi-Fi on many aircraft and are already confronting challenges.

Travelers who want Wi-Fi in the air cannot always tell if a plane will have Internet service when they book their tickets. Prices for service are still evolving, and the quality of the connection does not come close to matching what most people are used to on the ground.

"No matter what the system is, none of them right now are showing the ability to keep up with passenger demand," said Mary Kirby, editor in chief of Airline Passenger Experience magazine. "I've heard complaints about every single system."

Acknowledging the technical hurdles involved in delivering Internet service to a plane traveling 500 miles an hour, Kirby said airlines and their connectivity partners needed to better manage passenger expectations.

"It's time for the industry to say, 'Here's reasonably what you can expect, and it's not an at-home experience,'" she

said. "A passenger should expect to be able to use social media and check email. But you're not going to be able to send emails with really big files, and you're not going to be able to stream video."

A new website, Routehappy.com, is helping travelers find out if a flight has Wi-Fi – information many airlines do not reveal until after a ticket is booked. Routehappy lets travelers search for flights on a particular route, like New York to San Francisco, then sort the results based on various "happiness factors," including whether the flight offers Wi-Fi.

For a weekday in mid-April, Routehappy calculated that 24 percent of domestic flights offered Wi-Fi, 56 percent did not and 20 percent might. John Walton, Routehappy's director of data, says the "maybe" category reflects the fact that airlines are busy installing this technology, so it is not always possible to determine weeks in advance if a flight will have it or how well it will work.

"You never know how many other people are going to be using Wi-Fi at the same time," Walton said.

Airlines and Wi-Fi providers say typical demand is 5 to 10 percent of passengers, but use is often higher on longer flights. On Virgin America, which offers Wi-Fi on all its planes, 20 percent of passengers typically log on, said Abby Lunardini, a company spokeswoman, and more than a third use Wi-Fi on transcontinental routes.

Most carriers use an air-to-ground system provided by Gogo, which relies on a network of ground-based cellular towers to communicate with aircraft flying across the United States. Gogo's system can deliver Internet speeds of 3.1 to 9.8 megabits per second, usually much slower than a typical home connection.

Looking to address these speed limitations, Gogo and other Wi-

Fi providers are moving toward satellite-based systems capable of delivering faster Internet service. Satellite systems also work over the ocean, enabling carriers to offer Wi-Fi on international flights.

American Airlines has international Wi-Fi on its Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, which fly between Dallas or New York and London, and between New York and São Paulo, Brazil. United Airlines also offers Wi-Fi service on some international flights but does not specify which routes.

Delta is considered a leader on the Wi-Fi front in the United States, providing Internet service on more than 800 aircraft, including many regional jets. American has about 450 Wi-Fi-equipped planes, Southwest Airlines more than 400 and United 50. JetBlue plans to introduce a satellite-based Internet service this year, promising faster speeds than its competitors offer – and at least basic Wi-Fi free.

The cost of in-flight Wi-Fi is still all over the map, as carriers figure out what customers are willing to pay. Southwest has taken a simple approach, charging \$8 for a daylong Wi-Fi pass; other airlines charge fees based on the length of the flight, the connection time and the device. It can cost just \$2 to connect with a smartphone for 30 minutes, or \$4.95 to \$21.95 a flight for a laptop.

But some fliers simply will not pay to log on.

“What we’re seeing is a reluctance to pay,” said Ms. Kirby of Airline Passenger Experience magazine, “which is quite fascinating because these systems cost a lot of money on aircraft.”

Airports and hotels are confronting a similar situation. Of the 10 busiest airports in the United States, those in Los Angeles, Dallas/Fort Worth, Denver, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Phoenix and Charlotte, N.C., offer at least some free Wi-Fi service.

But the trade-off can be overloaded networks that frustrate passengers, which is why Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport – the busiest in the United States – is upgrading its infrastructure before switching to free Wi-Fi this year.

“Our system wasn’t built to accommodate the number of customers we expect to have with the free Wi-Fi,” said Myrna White, a spokeswoman for the airport, which dropped its Wi-Fi fee to \$4.95 a day last fall.

Recognizing the challenge airports and other public locations face, the Federal Communications Commission is working to increase the amount of unlicensed spectrum available for Wi-Fi, which is how passengers at a busy terminal connect to the airport’s broadband service.

“What we have proposed is to provide more space on the airwaves to accommodate the growth of Wi-Fi,” said Julius P. Knapp, chief of the F.C.C.’s office of engineering and technology. “That translates to faster data speeds and reduced congestion.”

Free Wi-Fi, at least for basic Internet service, is also becoming the norm at hotels, particularly at less expensive ones. According to the American Hotel and Lodging Association, 23 percent of hotels in the United States charge for in-room Internet access. This week, the hospitality site HotelChatter.com released its annual Wi-Fi report, finding that two-thirds of hotels offered free Internet access, at least in the lobby. Luxury hotels are still more likely to charge than midrange or budget hotels.

Mark G. Johnson, HotelChatter’s founder, said guests’ top complaints were hotels that charged a separate Internet fee for each device, like a tablet and a laptop, and those that offered inadequate support when the network was having problems.

“What I’m hearing more is that people at the front desk almost throw their hands in the air,” Johnson said. “They may give you back your money, but they can’t help you.”

Some travelers bring their own backup Wi-Fi, in case the hotel’s Internet service is spotty.

David J. Danto, a consultant with Dimension Data, says he travels with a portable MiFi hot spot from Sprint, which he uses if a hotel’s Wi-Fi service is slow. Although he says he does not mind paying for Wi-Fi if it works well, he has little patience for hotels that blame network outages on high demand.

“If everybody flushes the toilet at the same time, you wouldn’t want the building to come down,” Danto said. “I’m not sure why they wouldn’t design the Internet service the same way.”

USFS creates app for National Forests

Now there’s a lighter and more convenient way to view National Forest maps.

All U.S. Forest Service visitor maps and quad maps covering portions of California are available for purchase through the Avenza PDF maps application. This app is free and available for most Apple products through the iTunes store. The Avenza website has a beta version of the app for Android devices.

Once the app is installed:

- Purchase and download professionally created maps from the thousands of maps in the Avenza Map Store.

- View your location using the integrated GPS (iPad 3G/LTE or iPhone 3GS or higher model required), even without a wireless connection or cell phone signal
 - Plot placemarks, add notes, enter attribute data and add photos as attributes
 - Search for places and points of interest on any map (online connection required)
 - Export placemarks to share with colleagues, friends, or for future use
 - Measure distances and areas.
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‘Oliver’ features Zephyr Cove kids

Two Lake Tahoe youth will be performing in this month’s stage production of “Oliver” in Carson City.

Logan Chapman will star as Oliver, and his sister, Drue Chapman, will play a member of Fagin’s gang.

The Western Nevada Musical Theatre Company’s production of “Oliver” plays at the Carson City Community Center the weekends of May 10-12 and May 17-19.

The story is about a child who is sold by a London orphanage because he asked for more food. Oliver eventually escapes to the streets of London, finding adventure and a loving home.

To purchase tickets and find out performance times, go online.

The Carson City Community Center is located at 851 E. William

St., on the corner of Roop Street and Highway 50 East. Tickets will also be sold at the venue one hour before showtime.

Power of SWAT team can be impressive

By Ted Long

The SWAT team gave its presentation this week and it was impressive. That is to say if you are impressed by firepower.

Once again the presenters were young, friendly and obviously love their job. Both of them said so repeatedly. I guess it takes a certain sort to do it, with all the danger and everything, but there is also the element of liking to be on the chase, seeing fun in it and both of them definitely do.

They demonstrated the bombs they use for entry and the various guns they carry. The vehicles were dark and scary and looked very uncomfortable to ride in; part of the role to be played.



Ted Long

As a citizen, I am constantly tested on my desire to be protected and my fear of the power of the state. I do not consider myself a conspiracy type or paranoid, but in the course of my years as a lawyer I have seen abuse and the great

potential of it, by the guys with the guns and with the power to remove us from society. It is clear that I am in a minority in our group. Some of the participants, in my view, overplay their excitement about the show of force, and the bad guy notion. There is an attempt at balance by the checks and balances of the justice system; the Constitution and I hope my some deep seeded sense of fairness in those entrusted to protect us. However. all deals seem to be off when you are shot dead and the SWAT team is a front line example of that possibility.

There is also the issue of leadership. The police are a paramilitary operation, heavily trained to just react and to follow orders. So while the majority may be sound, what if a leader goes astray? Kind of like that great movie "Doctor Strangelove". The boys talked about the controls, the need to account for every bullet, etc. I am not so sure all that process is public, and it would be easy to hide facts in the bureaucracy.

All that said, the presentation was great, the officers forthright and the overall tone of the group was go get'em. And while I very much appreciate the community support for our law enforcement personnel, I continue to waive the flag of caution, and of a great public awareness of those who protect us. Let us never forget lessons from history and what can be done with power gone bad. As citizens it is our job to keep the fox from guarding the hen houses.

Ted Long is a South Lake Tahoe resident participating in the El Dorado County Sheriff's Citizens Academy.

Hotel guests not turning on in-room entertainment

By Jane L. Levere, New York Times

Len Markidan, a 26-year-old marketing consultant based in San Francisco, is the type of business traveler who forced LodgeNet, the hotel guest-room entertainment provider, to file recently for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

Markidan, who spends 40 percent of his time traveling on business and is an elite participant in the Hilton and Hyatt loyalty programs, takes his MacBook Pro and iPad with him on the road and watches all television programs by streaming them on his laptop, using a portable router to extend the Wi-Fi signal in his hotel room.

“For a lot of people my age and a lot of people in general, the way we consume entertainment at home is changing,” he said. “I no longer have a cable subscription – the way I watch entertainment at home is the same way I watch it on the road. I have a Hulu subscription, Amazon Prime and Netflix.”

Guest-room entertainment “is not an amenity that will drive my decision to stay at a hotel,” he said, adding, “I’m a lot more concerned with loyalty program perks.”

James Lingle of Highlands Ranch, Colo., a consultant to hotel companies and guest-room entertainment service providers like LodgeNet’s competitor iBahn, observed: “If you look back, typically the first thing a guest would do when they walked into the door of a hotel room would be to turn on the TV. Now people bring their entertainment with them, tablet-based devices like an iPad, accounts and memberships like Netflix, Amazon Prime and Hulu Plus, and they want to be able to use them.”

LodgeNet's decline directly reflects these changes. According to its bankruptcy filing, the number of hotel rooms it served globally dropped to 1.5 million in 2011 from 2 million in 2009. It provided guest-room entertainment services to most major hotel chains, usually by installing and maintaining free televisions and offering video-on-demand entertainment, for which it and the hotels received fees. LodgeNet's sales in 2011 were \$421.3 million, a 21 percent drop from a high of \$533.9 million in 2008.

Colony Capital, a real estate and hotel investment firm in Los Angeles, led a group that invested \$70 million in a controlling interest in LodgeNet, based in Sioux Falls, S.D., and brought in a management team of former Starwood, Fairmont and Hilton executives. LodgeNet, which emerged from bankruptcy in late March, also signed an agreement with DirecTV to jointly offer entertainment to hotels and hospitals.

The revamped LodgeNet faces strong competition from companies including Swisscom Hospitality Services, based in Geneva; iBahn, based in Salt Lake City; Guest-Tek, of Calgary, Alberta; and Roomlinx, based in Broomfield, Colo. All are developing systems that let travelers consume entertainment the way Markidan does – via the Internet, frequently through subscriptions they already have and use at home, either through Wi-Fi or a direct cable connection between their laptop or tablet and the guest-room television set.

Different types of hotels have different policies regarding Internet access. Many less expensive hotels offer it free, while more expensive ones often charge for it. What's expected to happen next, speaking broadly, is that using the Internet for e-mail will be free, while many hotels will charge for uses requiring a lot of bandwidth, like downloading or streaming videos, with the cost tied to the amount of bandwidth required.

"We will give customers more short-form content at very

attractive prices, affinity packages of sports channels, just-missed TV, video games, as well as movies currently in theaters,” said Michael Ribero, LodgeNet’s new chief executive. “We want to give them the opportunity to watch what they want, even if it’s through Netflix and Amazon Prime.” He said LodgeNet will no longer provide television equipment in hotel guest rooms in exchange for video-on-demand fees. Instead, DirecTV will offer hotel owners lease financing for TVs, freeing capital that LodgeNet can invest in product and service improvements.

C. Scott Hansen, director of guest technology for Marriott International, said his company’s objective over the next several years was to connect every guest-room TV to the Internet. Marriott International also plans to limit the number of TV channels its brands offer to a targeted, all-high-definition lineup and to augment these with Internet-based, streaming content, via services like Netflix and YouTube.

Bandwidth capacity at many Marriott International hotels will need to be increased to support these services, an expense Mr. Hansen said would be offset by guests’ purchases of Internet access, commissions paid by services like Netflix for signing up new members and advertising revenue from companies that could use the TV or guest’s laptop or tablet screen for messages.

Josh Weiss, vice president of brand and guest technology for Hilton Worldwide, said his company offered a broad range of short, low-price TV programs, similar to those available from Netflix or iTunes, in many hotels, provided by LodgeNet and others. This content costs \$2 to \$5, far less than a full-length movie. Hilton Worldwide also offers a free, DirecTV service similar to DirecTV’s residential service at over 150 hotels across most of its brands and plans to expand this service this year.

Mike Blake, chief information officer of Commune Hotels and Resorts, said the company was considering keeping track of guests' channel preferences, which would automatically come up whenever a guest turned on the TV in the hotel room. He said this service, which guests could opt in for, should be available by the fourth quarter of this year. Other new services under consideration include the ability to customize music playlists for guests and to stream personal photos on guest room TVs.

Apple TV in hotel rooms at the Aloft Cupertino, a Starwood hotel, lets guests play video and music and display photos from any Apple device on their television set. Starwood is evaluating offering this system and additional entertainment options at other Aloft and Starwood hotels.

CitizenM, a Dutch chain of what it calls "affordable luxury" hotels – now all in Europe, with two slated to open in Manhattan this year and next – provides a Samsung tablet in each guest room, with technology from Swisscom that provides a music library and free video-on-demand TV and also controls the blinds, lighting and temperature.

The 85-year-old Peninsula Hong Kong this month will finish installation of a guest-room entertainment system that Ingvar Herland, Peninsula Hotels' general manager of research and technology, said costs \$10,000 to \$25,000 a room. This proprietary system features fully customizable bedside and desk tablets preset in a choice of five languages, with six more to follow this year. The tablet allows the guest to order room, concierge and housekeeping services, and to control lighting, curtains, the temperature and privacy options. It also provides – via a flat-screen, Blu-ray, LED television – terrestrial programming, 90 international television channels, 450 Internet radio stations, free HD and 3-D movies, as well as free international voice-over-Internet protocol telephone calls.

Herland said the new system would be offered at the Peninsula Paris, opening next year, and would eventually replace existing systems at other Peninsula hotels.

Travelers should not expect a proliferation of new services like the Peninsula's, said Bjorn Hanson, divisional dean of the Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management at New York University.

He said that although hotels in the United States this year were expected to spend a record percentage of profits on capital expenditures – like entertainment systems – profits per room also were expected to remain well below their 2006 peak. Companies offering new systems “that are expensive for hotel owners are doing so at a challenging time,” he said, adding that many hotel owners would consider premium cable service as an alternative.

One vanishing option is sex-related entertainment. Omni banned such programs in 1999, citing its support of “pro-family issues,” while Marriott International stopped offering it last year. “If you want it, you can access it online on your own,” said Hansen of Marriott.

El Dorado County needs foster families

May is Foster Parent Appreciation Month. There are currently 42 licensed foster family homes in El Dorado County.

Foster parents provide temporary, loving homes for children, ensuring that each child's physical and emotional needs are met. The foster parent makes sure the child is clothed, fed,

taken to school and to medical and counseling appointments, and other needed activities. Foster family homes receive a reimbursement to help pay for the care of the child.

Children of all ages, from newborns to teens, and from all walks of life, enter foster care.

Specific criteria must be met to become a licensed foster home. Foster parents must complete a health screening and criminal background check, must maintain certification in CPR and first aid, and complete a series of trainings. Once they are licensed, foster family homes may take in one or more children, depending upon the home situation and needs of the child or children.

The El Dorado County Foster Family Home Licensing Program licenses families and individual homes. The program also offers trainings, meetings and support services to foster parents as part of a collaborative effort with local colleges and other partnering agencies. According to Goucher, additional caring adults in El Dorado County are needed to consider foster parenting.

People are encouraged to call and ask questions. For more information about the Foster Family Home Licensing Program, call Debra Brown at (530) 642.7122.

‘Farewell to Manzanar’ author coming to Tahoe

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, award-winning author of “Farewell to Manzanar”, will be in South Lake Tahoe to speak about how the story of her family’s life in an internment camp became a

cautionary tale about civil rights violations.

She is one of five authors selected for the Cal Humanities Searching for Democracy California Reads Program.

A reception and book signing will follow.

The event is May 14 at 5pm at the South Lake Tahoe Library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.

For questions, contact Tahoe.Programs@gmail.com or (530) 573.3185.

STHS student honored for artwork

Five high school students garnered top awards in the Congressional Art Competition sponsored by members of Congress.

The five winners for the Fourth Congressional District competition will be recognized by Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, at a reception on May 1 at 5pm at BI Design Studio in El Dorado Hills.

Their art will be on display at the reception.

The competition was open to all high school students within California's Fourth Congressional District, and more than 40 pieces of art were submitted for judging.

The winners are:

1st Place – “Future Farmers of America”

Artist: Ashlyn Woods, Del Oro High School

2nd Place – “Freedom”

Artist: Julia Schmidseder, South Tahoe High School

3rd Place – “He Said”

Artist: Brandon Borjon, Granite Bay High School

Honorable Mention – “The Aviator”

Artist: Teri Nittler, Granite Bay High School

Honorable Mention – “Voyage”

Artist: Daisy Allison, Minarets High School

The winning entry from each Congressional district across the United States will be displayed for one year in the Cannon Tunnel of the U.S. Capitol.

Collecting art – work of a different kind

By Robert Schimmel

A funny thing happened on the way to the reception. The good news is that “funny” things are happening all the time, right, especially when we are willing to notice? Wanting to see the latest (three) exhibits opening at South Lake Tahoe’s Lake Tahoe Community College on April 18, I hustled but missed the art talk given by the Haldan Gallery’s featured collection’s

co-owner, Hanna Porter, so my mind took a detour to anxiousness.

What if she had a real gem to relate or various insights into collecting (the talk's theme) I'd never considered? What if ...?

Then my nerves calmed as the overall collection came into view and I "bumped" into a friend who gave me a brief summary. Immediately I settled into some veggies and dip to calm the dinner-hour pangs and began to take my usual quick, first impression stroll through the Haldan's open and inviting space.



Art comes in many forms at LTCC. Photo/LTN file

The collection is definitely as billed, "...an array of different mediums, content, and styles from an assortment of national and international artists," and not halfway around my initial loop I bumped into two friends of differing views regarding the collection. Although each was armed with a unique and relevant background for said opinion, I was once again reminded of how true the adage "you can't please everyone" really is. As for me, I enjoyed my first look and began seeking ways to educate myself regarding how such a mix of artworks came to be. Then, as serendipity would have it, I met Hanna Porter just as a lull occurred in the reception's traffic. What a blessing this was, and our encounter lasted a solid, stimulating 15-20 minutes as she graciously shared some of her history.

Like most endeavors in this world, there is no right or wrong way to collect art. This collection of diverse work evolved under the loving and discriminating eye of Porter, German born art lover and widow who professes not being an artist but rather a passionately involved lover of creativity and, therefore, all kinds of artistic expression.

As we conversed, this charming and engaging lady with a wonderful German accent, revealed three core principles I was able to isolate: 1) the artwork had to grab and hold her such that she knew she loved it and wanted to own it; 2) she wouldn't spend over \$2,000 for one piece of work under any circumstance; and 3) there needed to be a "story" or relationship connected to the artist that she could feel and/or experience. Mind you, these rules may not have been the only criteria in every case but clearly laid the groundwork for this assemblage. She expressed how at times a piece was acquired through a strategically planned purchase or a serendipitous opportunity. And like most of us, Porter has her favorites and has evolved over time in the styles, techniques, and themes or messages about which she feels most passionate.



Robert
Schimmel

At some point in our conversation I was struck at how fascinating and insightful it might be for her to arrange her exhibitions in chronological order of her purchases. This would more concisely represent the fruits of her own values and changing tastes and give a thread for the viewer to follow and reflect upon re his/her own discriminating notes. I was

pleasantly surprised to see her eyes light up with a genuine smile and acknowledgement that the idea indeed had merit and she'd like to try it.

As I left the Haldan, my appreciation for such exhibits and what they bring to our community was heightened. Receptions are not always so personal, and I was very fortunate, but the Haldan staff consistently does a fine job of giving us the chance to meet artist(s) and hear presentations or talks during the reception evenings. And don't forget that the Haldan usually has an audio tour or interview available. Getting some personal notes on "why and how" to collect art is another welcomed contribution to our edification and how this college and its Art Department seeks to improve life in Tahoe.

My sincere thanks to Phyllis Shafer and her staff for all their superlative efforts in bringing us exhibitions of diverse themes, unknown to nationally prominent artists, varied cultures, etc., not to mention the rotating exhibitions in the Foyer and Student Commons Galleries. No small feat under the best of circumstances, so be sure to attend these three concurrent exhibits and take advantage of our tax dollars and private donations serving us in concrete and rewarding ways.

Robert Schimmel is a professional artist in South Lake Tahoe as well as host of "Lake Tahoe Art Scene" on KTHO radio on Thursdays at 5:15pm.

Stressed? Your body has the

answer



We all know the face of stress: the clenched jaw, the furrowed brow, the intense stare. And, really, it's not a bad look. We all do some of our best work under pressure. Adrenaline and other stress hormones give us the kick start we need to meet deadlines and generally get ahead in life.

But when stress runs too hot for too long, the look changes. People who are stressed for years don't merely appear driven or focused. They look beaten down. In large doses, stress can wear the body and speed up the clock on aging.

The wear and tear of stress can show up in every part of the body: individual cells, bones, skin. You can even see it in photographs. A Dutch study from 2012 asked volunteers to guess the age of nearly 300 people from photos. The researchers also checked all of the photo subjects for cortisol, a key stress hormone. The results were telling: People with high levels of cortisol almost always looked older than they really were. The researchers estimated that each tiny increase in cortisol – each micromole per liter, to be exact – aged a person by about half a year.

Ronald Nathan, an author and psychologist who runs a men's-only practice in Albany, N.Y., says he can see the telltale signs of stress in his clients. Wrinkles are one giveaway. "They have the No. 11 between their eyebrows," he says. "I think the Botox industry is largely based on trying to erase

the signs of stress.”

Why does stress leave so many marks? As Nathan explains, cortisol and other stress hormones trigger a “fight or flight” mind-set—something that was very helpful when our species was competing with lions and cave bears. “But in modern life, we don’t have a lot of fights, and there’s no place to run,” he says. The body turns that tension inward, sometimes with disastrous results.

Here are just a few ways that stress can wear down the body. As Nathan frequently tells his patients, stress-related problems can often be avoided. Lifestyle changes, counseling and relaxation exercises can take much of the sting out of stress, he says.

Grinding teeth. Lots of people take out their stress on their teeth, says Eugene Antenucci, a fellow of the American Academy of General Dentistry who has a practice in Huntington, N.Y. As he explains, teeth grinding, or bruxism, is a natural extension of the clenched jaw that most people have in times of stress. When patients come in with newly chipped or worn-down teeth, they’re usually going through a rough patch in their lives. “I hear it all the time. Their jobs are tough. They have money issues. Someone has passed away. They need to deal with stress to stop the grinding.”

Gum disease. Studies have found that people with the most cortisol in their blood, an unmistakable sign of stress, are especially likely to suffer from periodontal disease. And that leads to tooth loss and root canals, as if they didn’t already have enough stress in their lives. It’s not entirely clear how trouble at work or home can lead to unhealthy gums, but Antenucci says that stressed-out people often have dry mouths, one of the major causes of gum disease. “They also don’t take very good care of themselves. When you’re under stress, brushing every day is something that might not happen.”

Inflammation. Lots of people are literally inflamed with stress, says Sheldon Cohen, professor of psychology at Carnegie Mellon University. He explains that cortisol and other stress hormones trigger inflammation all over the body. In small doses, that's OK, because a little inflammation can help fight infections and speed up healing from injury. But when people are too stressed out for too long, inflammation can get out of control, setting the stage for a long list of potential problems, including pain, heart disease and a weakened immune system. Cohen's own research has found that stressed people get more than their fair share of colds.

Thinning hair. Most people dealing with hair loss can put the bulk of the blame on their genes. But stress certainly doesn't help. A 2012 study of 98 pairs of identical female twins found that sisters who reported the most stress in their lives also had the most hair loss. Perhaps not entirely coincidentally, thinning hair was also especially common in women who had the most children.

Thinning bones. One of the pernicious side effects of cortisol is that it keeps bones from absorbing calcium. A 2012 Israeli study of 135 post-menopausal women found that depression, anxiety and stress were all associated with low bone mineral density.

Weight gain. Recent studies have found that stress can upset the balance of hormones that help control appetite. But it's no secret that stressed people often turn to food for comfort. A 2012 study of 457 women by researchers at UC San Francisco found that women with the most stressful lives also had the biggest problems with overeating.