Immediate, Intermediate, and Prolonged Stress Effects

The stress response has immediate (seconds), intermediate (minutes to hours), and prolonged (days) effects through which the symptoms of physical stress can manifest. To reinforce your understanding of each phase of this physiological process, please take a moment to reflect on how your body reacts to stress through these three processes.

1. What do you feel when immediately threatened?
   a. Tingling sensations       Yes   No
   b. Sweating                 Yes   No
   c. Muscle tension (e.g., jaw muscles) Yes  No
   d. Rapid heart rate         Yes   No
   e. Rapid breathing (or holding your breath) Yes  No
   f. Rush of blood to your face and neck (blushing) Yes  No

2. How would you best classify your body’s intermediate (within hours) response to stress?
   a. Tension headache         Yes   No
   b. Migraine headache        Yes   No
   c. Sore neck and shoulders  Yes   No
   d. Sore throat              Yes   No
   e. Allergies                Yes   No
   f. Stomachache              Yes   No
   g. GI tract problems        Yes   No

3. What do you notice as long-term effects of prolonged stress (five to ten days)?
   a. Cold or flu              Yes   No
   b. Acne (broken-out face blemishes) Yes  No
   c. Herpes flare-up (around lips) Yes  No
   d. Menstrual period irregularities Yes  No