# Chapter 6 Behavior

# Overview

R. Dantzer

MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA

# Abstract

When confronted with stressors, individuals adjust their behavior and physiology to cope with the situation. Behavioral responses to stress are not reflex-like. Their nature depends on the appraisal of the eliciting situation along the dimensions of novelty, uncertainty, and controllability. Coping strategies are associated with different forms of behavioral responses depending in particular on the ability or inability to control the situation. Social settings are often seen as a source of stress leading to agonistic behavior. However, stress can also be alleviated by the different forms of social support that are available in the group. Successful coping strategies decrease physiological arousal, measured by cortisol and catecholamines. Stress does not necessarily originate only from the outside. It can also originate from the inside, as a result of the demands to which individuals expose themselves, depending on their personality.