



STRESS

Symptoms and Management



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Stress Defined

Stress is the “adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed on them”

www.hse.gov.uk



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Stress Defined

- A perceived imbalance between demand and response capacity, under conditions where failure to meet demand had important consequences. (McGrath 1970)
- A general feeling of pressure, anxiety and tension. (Morley et al., 1998)



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What is Stress

Stress is basically the emotional, mental and physical wear and tear we go through as we try to adjust to new life situations.

Positive stress can motivate us to meet deadlines, achieve and to compete.



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What is Stress

Negative stress can leave one feeling overwhelmed and frustrated.

In extreme cases, stress can result in distress leading to psychological and physical problems.



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What Causes Stress

Stress is not caused by events, jobs or by other people. Stress is caused by the way we react to, or interpret, events, situations or people.

People differ. What one person considers stressful, another may consider to be fun or exciting.



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Some Events which may make us feel Stressed.

Major Life Changes, eg. College,
Divorce/Separation, Pregnancy,
Marriage, Bereavement,
Unemployment,
New Job, Moving to New Location.

In short: **UNCERTAINTY**



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Other Events which may make us feel Stressed.

Environmental Factors:

Time Pressure

Financial Problems

Competition

Noise

Disappointments



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Symptoms of Stress

Clear that negative and positive events can make us feel Stressed.

Stress affects our Feelings, Thoughts, Behaviour and Physical Bodies.



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Symptoms of Stress

Feelings:

Anxiety

Scared

Irritability

Mood Swings



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Symptoms of Stress

Thoughts:

Low Self Esteem

Fear of Failure

Inability to Concentrate

Embarrassment

Worry about the Future

Forgetfulness

Preoccupation with events



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Symptoms of Stress

Behaviour:

Stuttering

Unprovoked Crying

Impulsiveness

Nervous Laughing

Grinding of Teeth

Increase Smoking

Increased Alcohol Use

Increase Drug Use

Accident Prone

Loss of Appetite

Overeating



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Symptoms of Stress

Bodily Affects:

Perspiration/ Sweaty
Hands
Trembling
Tiredness
Indigestion/Vomiting
Loss of Weight
Diarrhea
Headaches

Back/Neck Ache
Insomnia
PMTs
Urinating Frequently
Increased Heartbeat



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Work Related Stress

Feeling of being Overworked, Job Insecurity, Deadlines, Competition, Fast Pace, New Innovations (Scandinavia)

Important to avoid Burnout

Burnout: Demotivated, Depressed, Nervous Breakdowns, Cannot do Job any Longer.



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Managing Stress

Ask yourself why you react to some events/situations as you do. Try to reduce the intensity of your emotional reactions to stress

Increase your emotional reserves by developing supportive friendships. Be gentle and kind to yourself

Avoid unnecessary competition (Perfectionism !!!!!!!)

Recognise and accept your limits

Recreation Time, Exercise, Hobbies.



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Managing Stress

- **Practice Relaxation Techniques.** May help to shorten the time you are exposed to stressful situations
- **Sort out issues which give rise to feelings of uncertainty.**
- **Eat a balanced diet.**
- **Set Realistic Goals and Pursue Meaningful Goals**



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Managing Stress

- **Set Priorities**
- **Reduce the demands which have been placed on you. Learn to say 'NO'**
- **Learn to Think Positive**
- **Plan Ahead. Set aside time for leisure and relaxation and STICK TO IT**
- **When studying for an exam, study in short blocks to begin with and gradually lengthen study time. Take frequent short breaks.**



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Managing Stress

- Maintain control over your own life. Otherwise events/issues/others will take control



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