

Common Symptoms of Stress

Long-term stress can change your body chemistry in a way that makes you more susceptible to serious health problems. Did you know that long-term stress can put you at greater risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol? Often, we develop unhealthy coping patterns in response to feeling stressed. Addressing these coping patterns can be a good first step in reducing stress.

Causes of stress include:

- Negative or unhelpful thinking
- Conflict with other people
- Health problems
- Money problems
- New job or baby
- Feeling overwhelmed/time pressures
- Too many duties
- Unhappy with job
- Vacation
- Wedding
- Relationship troubles
- Death of a loved one
- Child/elder care
- Long commute time
- Traffic

When you feel stressed you may feel:

- Angry
- Annoyed
- Anxious
- Confused
- Impatient
- Sad
- Worried
- Overwhelmed
- Frustrated
- Unfocused
- Defeated
- Tired
- Hungry



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You may have these physical responses:

- Aching head, back, or neck
- Racing heartbeat
- Tight muscles
- Upset stomach
- Shallow breathing

Stress can also cause you to:

- Have negative and unhelpful thoughts
- Drink too much alcohol
- Forget things
- Put off doing the things you need to do
- Rush around without getting much done
- Sleep too little, too much, or both
- Smoke
- Take too much medicine
- Work too much
- Crave unhealthy food
- Experience increased hunger
- Eat too much or too little
- Make mistakes or have accidents

Experiencing stress may make it harder to:

- Make healthy choices about eating or drinking
- Stick to your fitness goals
- Maintain limits around watching TV, videos, or using the computer
- Prioritize your health and healthy behaviors
- Maintain healthy relationships

Becoming more aware of how stress shows up in your life is the first step to reducing and managing stress.

