

How to Identify Stress

Stress is an adverse reaction(s) experienced to too much (or too little) pressure.

What to look for:

These are some of the symptoms that are indicators of too much pressure that can come from yourself, work, home, any combination of, or maybe even all three.

Psychological signs

- Inability to concentrate or make simple decisions
- Memory lapses
- Becoming rather vague
- Easily distracted
- Less intuitive & creative
- Worrying
- Negative thinking
- Depression & anxiety

Emotional signs

- Tearful
- Irritable
- Mood swings
- Extra sensitive to criticism
- Defensive
- Feeling out of control
- Lack of motivation
- Angry
- Frustrated
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of self-esteem

Physical signs

- Aches/pains & muscle tension/grinding teeth
- Frequent colds/infections
- Allergies/rashes/skin irritations
- Constipation/diarrhoea/ IBS
- Weight loss or gain
- Indigestion/heartburn/ulcers

- Hyperventilating/lump in the throat/pins & needles
- Dizziness/palpitations
- Panic attacks/nausea
- Physical tiredness
- Menstrual changes/loss of libido/sexual problems
- Heart problems/high blood pressure

Behavioural signs

- No time for relaxation or pleasurable activities
- Prone to accidents, forgetfulness
- Increased reliance on alcohol, smoking, caffeine, recreational or illegal drugs
- Becoming a workaholic
- Poor time management and/or poor standards of work
- Absenteeism
- Self neglect/change in appearance
- Social withdrawal
- Relationship problems
- Insomnia or waking tired
- Reckless
- Aggressive/anger outbursts
- Nervous
- Uncharacteristically lying

The symptoms that affect you will often accumulate until you are forced to take notice of them.

Don't rationalise the symptoms away, if you are not sure - ask your GP

It is often the behavioural symptoms that are noticed, as they are more obvious, but by this time stress has been going on for many months, maybe even a year or more.

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