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## Signs of Stress

### How do I know if I'm stressed?

People experience stress differently, sometimes it can be helpful to think of the last time you know you were really stressed. What were the things that you did or feelings that you had that indicate you were stressed then? Use those signs to let yourself know if you might be stressed now. Listed below are some specific signs that can indicate stress and suggestions for reducing your stress level.

### Signs of Stress

- no longer taking pleasure in activities that used to be enjoyable
- finding even simple things burdensome or difficult to accomplish
- distracted by all that you have to do or that it's hard to keep track of little things, like where are my keys?
- feeling on edge, frustrated or annoyed, having less patience
- a change in eating habits, either eating more or less than usual
- sleeping more than usual (can't bring yourself to get out of bed) or having difficulty getting to sleep (too many things on your mind)
- being easily annoyed by simple problems or the way other people behave
- having normal emotions that are displayed to an extreme degree or for a prolonged period of time (e.g., fear, tearfulness, nervousness)
- marked changes in personality or mood
- listlessness, lack of energy
- trouble concentrating or making decisions
- high levels of irritability, including abrasive, unruly or aggressive behavior: (banging on walls with your fists, throwing things to rid yourself of frustration)
- using alcohol or other drugs that is motivated by a sense of wanting to relieve stress or drug and alcohol use that leads to recklessness, impairment, loss of control or represents a change in your use

### What can I do to relieve stress?

The obvious things do make a difference, like:

- increase exercise: it does help to relieve stress
- maintain a regular sleep schedule: sleep deprivation is a significant contributor to someone being emotionally stressed
- limit alcohol and drug use: alcohol and drugs contribute to stress they don't really relieve it.
- When someone drinks too much not only do they have physical symptoms afterwards (e.g. hangover) but emotionally they can be on edge and depressed for a period of time after they've used alcohol or drugs
- Manage your time: having too many demands on your time does result in stress.
- Understanding why you are stressed in the first place. It's not always obvious why a person is stressed and talking with someone can help you see reasons for your stress you may not be able to on your own

These are obvious suggestions but sometimes it helps to be reminded of the obvious especially if you are really stressed. For additional suggestions on managing your stress, check out what's available through our link to [Virtual Pamphlets](#).

People experience stress differently, sometimes it can be helpful to think of the last time you were really stressed and the kinds of things that indicate to you that you were stressed. Use those things to let yourself know if you might be stressed now.

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