

What are the warning signs of stress?



The first step towards controlling stress is to recognize the warning signs that our bodies and mind's send us!

See how many of the warning signs you recognize from personal experience –

Learn to consciously acknowledge when you are feeling stressed so that you can take steps to control the symptoms.

Physical symptoms

- muscular tension and fatigue
- head, shoulder, neck and backaches
- tired eyes, muscle-twitching at the corners of the eyes dry mouth, stiff jaw
- sweaty palms, cold fingers
- indigestion, heartburn
- frequent urination, bladder infections
- breathlessness, erratic breathing, hyperventilation
- heart palpitations
- frequent colds and headaches
- weight loss or gain
- impotence, loss of libido

Emotional symptoms

- increased anxiety, panic attacks
- loss of self-esteem
- depression and negativity
- feelings of hostility and resentment
- moodiness, tearfulness
- lack of a sense of humour
- nightmares

General early-warning signs

- irritability, impatience, being edgy and uptight, snapping at others, tending to blame them for the fact that you are in a bad mood, oversensitivity, easily taking offence where none is intended, being liable to see things in a negative light
- feeling tired but being unable to sleep, or sleeping badly and waking up unrefreshed
- a change in your normal eating habits, eating either more or less, and often replacing meals and healthy snacks with fast food and chocolate
- relying more and more on alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs
- feeling sick, getting tummy upsets, diarrhoea or constipation
- nervous twitches and habits like nail-biting, scratching or knee-jiggling.

Psychological symptoms

- lack of concentration or attention, forgetfulness
- inability to think clearly, difficulty in making simple decisions loss of perspective, obsessing over details
- a nagging feeling of being under pressure of time mental exhaustion, burn-out

Behavioural symptoms

- angry outbursts and aggression
- non-stop talking, interrupting others
- nervous habits
- workaholism or absenteeism
- social withdrawal
- neglecting appearance / hygiene

If you are experiencing symptoms of stress, you can contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first. Services include telephone counselling, information services. Call Care first on 0800 174319 and you can speak to a professional counsellor in confidence.