

STRESS

Stress can make you feel anxious, tense or irritable. You may also feel overwhelmed by everything you need to do. Physically you may feel run down and tired, with little energy. Being stressed might also make it hard for you to relax, particularly if you're thinking about all the things you have to do.

Look out for some of these signs:

- increased blood pressure
- increased heart rate
- increased muscle tension
- headaches
- increased anxiety
- depression
- aggression
- confusion
- increased smoking
- increased drinking
- irritability
- obsessive concern with trivial issues
- poor work performance
- difficulty sleeping.

Tips for coping:

- Try seeing a difficult situation as a challenge to overcome, rather than something to get you down.
- Try not to make a mountain out of a molehill.
- Try to plan things better to give yourself more time to do things.
- Give yourself some time to unwind and relax each day. Schedule in time to relax and don't feel guilty about it.
- Do some regular physical activity that you enjoy.
- Try not to skip meals or snack on sugary or fatty foods. Eat lots of fruit and vegetables and wholegrains.
- Talk about it with someone.
- Avoid conflict where possible.
- Try to spend more time with people who make you feel good about yourself.
- Establish a regular sleep routine.

You should get help if you:

- You feel stressed often
- Particular things stress you and you feel they are beyond your control
- You feel your reactions to stress are extreme or worry you
- You feel anxious or depressed about stress.

You can get help from:

- Your doctor
- Your local community health centre
- Psychologists or counsellors.