

## 50 Common Signs of Stress

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Recognizing that you are under stress is the first step in learning how to deal with your stress. What if you are so used to living with stress, you don't know how to identify it?

Whether you are experiencing stress due to a recent situation or you have been experiencing stress for a long time, your body and mind may be experiencing different symptoms. Here are some 'warning signs' that stress is affecting your body and mind.

1. Frequent headaches, jaw clenching or pain
2. Gritting or grinding teeth
3. Stuttering or stammering
4. Tremors, trembling of lips, hands
5. Neck ache, back pain, muscle spasms
6. Light headedness, faintness, dizziness
7. Ringing, buzzing or "popping" sounds
8. Frequent blushing, sweating
9. Cold or sweaty hands, feet
10. Dry mouth, problems swallowing
11. Frequent colds, infections, herpes sores
12. Rashes, itching, hives, "goose bumps"
13. Unexplained or frequent "allergy" attacks
14. Heartburn, stomach pain, nausea
15. Excess belching, flatulence
16. Constipation, diarrhea
17. Difficulty breathing, sighing
18. Sudden attacks of panic
19. Chest pain, palpitations
20. Frequent urination
21. Poor sexual desire or performance
22. Excess anxiety, worry, guilt, nervousness
23. Increased anger, frustration, hostility
24. Depression, frequent or wild mood swings
25. Increased or decreased appetite
26. Insomnia, nightmares, disturbing dreams
27. Difficulty concentrating, racing thoughts
28. Trouble learning new information
29. Forgetfulness, disorganization, confusion
30. Difficulty in making decisions
31. Feeling overloaded or overwhelmed
32. Frequent crying spells or suicidal thoughts
33. Feelings of loneliness or worthlessness
34. Little interest in appearance, punctuality
35. Nervous habits, fidgeting, feet tapping
36. Increased frustration, irritability, edginess
37. Overreaction to petty annoyances
38. Increased number of minor accidents
39. Obsessive or compulsive behavior
40. Reduced work efficiency or productivity
41. Lies or excuses covering up poor work
42. Rapid or mumbled speech
43. Excessive defensiveness or suspiciousness
44. Problems in communication, sharing
45. Social withdrawal and isolation
46. Constant tiredness, weakness, fatigue
47. Frequent use of over-the-counter drugs
48. Weight gain or loss without diet changes
49. Increased smoking, alcohol or drug use
50. Excessive gambling or impulse buying

Recognize any of these symptoms?

To take control of stress you need to accept responsibility for the role you play in creating or maintaining it.

The first step is to identify your stressors, while looking at your habits, attitudes and excuses

- Do I explain stress as temporary? Do I view stress as entirely normal?
- Do I define stress as an integral part of my work or home life or as part of my personality?
- Do I blame stress on other people or outside events?

These are some very unhealthy and unproductive ways of coping with stress:

- Smoking
- Drinking excessively
- Over-eating or under-eating
- Using recreational drugs to relax
- Sleeping too much
- Procrastinating
- Withdrawing from family, friends and activities
- Anger outbursts

Here is a simple formula for dealing with stressful situations – the 4-“**A**”s:

- **A**void the stressor
  - Learn to say no
  - Avoid people who stress you out
  - Take control of your environment
  - Avoid hot-button topics
- **A**lter the stressor
  - Express your feelings
  - Be willing to compromise
- **A**dapt to the stressor
  - Reframe the problem – view problems from a more positive perspective
  - Look at the big picture – focus on the positive
  - Adjust your standards: **PERFECTIONISM** is a major source of avoidable stress
- **A**ccept the stressor
  - Don't try to change the uncontrollable
  - Look for the upside
  - Shorten your to-do list
  - Distinguish between must and should
  - Prioritize
  - Be more assertive
  - Manage your time better
  - Share your feelings
  - Learn to forgive

Dealing with stress often means counteracting stress with these De-Stressing tips:

- Set aside daily relaxation time
- Take vacations
- Meditate
- Practice progressive relaxation
- Relax your breathing
- Strengthen relationships
- Exercise regularly
- Eat a healthy diet
- Reduce caffeine and sugar
- Avoid excessive alcohol
- Avoid smoking & recreational drugs
- Get enough sleep
- Get professional advice
  - Cognitive/behavioral therapies
  - Biofeedback
  - Medications
- **Get an executive physical and consult with medical experts**

If you feel that stress has a negative impact on your health, the best tool we can recommend is an executive physical. Call us today to schedule your executive physical.