



STRESS

Stress is not a diagnosable mental health disorder but a symptom of difficulties with coping, a feeling of being overloaded, wound up, tense and worried. We all experience stress at times. It can sometimes help to motivate us to get a task finished or perform well and some people thrive on stress.

Stress can also be harmful – if you experience high levels of stress for a long period of time, or it interferes with your ability to enjoy a healthy life, seek professional help.

Your attitude, personality and approach to life will influence how you respond to stress; we all have different personalities and coping mechanisms, which are reflected in how we manage situations.

STRESS AND PHYSICAL ILLNESS

When we feel under stress, our body responds with the fight or flight mechanism – increased heartbeat, blood pressure and breathing. This is hard on your body, using extra energy and may contribute to physical illness. If symptoms persist, see your doctor.

TIPS FOR MANAGING STRESS

Prevention is better than cure for stress. The following tips will help you reduce or prevent stress:

- Exercise regularly
- Avoid unnecessary conflict
- Relax – take time out for yourself, enjoy the company of good friends, practise deep breathing exercises, yoga or meditation
- Eat nutritious food with plenty of vegetables and fruit
- Sleep well
- Enjoy your life – ensure you have a balance in life, with plenty of fun and enjoyable activities
- If you feel stressed, try to understand why and what makes you feel stressed and prepare for stressful events in advance
- Seek help from your GP, counsellor, psychologist or community mental health service

MORE INFORMATION

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

www.mindhealthconnect.org.au