

Stress Warning Signals

Stress triggers the release of stress hormones, which cause many symptoms. While the stress responses are bio-chemical, it triggers responses on all levels; physical, emotional, behavioral, cognitive and spiritual.

Listed below are general stress warning signals. Check the ones you experience when under stress.

Physical

- Headaches
- Indigestion
- Stomach aches
- Sweaty palms
- Sleep difficulties
- Dizziness
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Back pain
- Tight neck, shoulders
- Racing heart
- Restlessness
- Tiredness
- Ringing in ears
- Cold hands
- _____

Behavioral

- Excess smoking
- Bossiness
- Screaming/shouting
- Compulsive gum chewing
- Critical of others and/or self
- Pacing finger/foot tapping
- Grinding of teeth
- Overuse of alcohol
- Compulsive eating
- Inability to get things done
- Unable to sit still
- Biting fingernails
- _____

Emotional

- Crying
- Nervousness, anxiety

- Boredom - no meaning to things
- Edginess - ready to explode
- Feeling powerless to change things
- Overwhelming sense of pressure
- Anger
- Loneliness
- Unhappiness for no reason
- Easily upset
- _____

Cognitive

- Trouble thinking clearly
- Forgetfulness
- Lack of creativity
- Memory loss
- Inability to make decisions
- Thoughts of running away
- Constant worry
- Loss of sense of humor
- Excessive, compulsive thoughts
- _____

Spiritual

- Apathy
- Emptiness
- Lack of purpose
- Unworthiness
- Shame
- Hopelessness
- Separateness
- Unable to surrender/let go
- Fearful
- Powerlessness
- _____

Center for Living
Lifestyle Management for Mind-Body Health

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www.prairieheart.com

5 quick ways to beat stress

1. Start the day with an intention.

Most of us are good at "doing," but identifying an intention helps us make conscious choices about how we want to "be." When you feel stressed, focus on your intention and decide how you want to respond. This allows you to act out of awareness, rather than old conditioning.

2. Breathe.

Take a deep breath in through the nose, then exhale slowly through the nose or mouth. As you breathe in, silently say to yourself "I am calm," and as you breathe out, silently say "and relaxed." Practice several times daily and especially when you feel out of balance.

3. Release those neck muscles.

Breathe in, then exhale slowly as you drop your right ear towards your right shoulder. Stop at the first point of resistance. Take a few deep breaths and then alternate on the left side.

4. Take a walk.

Exercise is good for the body and releases those "feel good" endorphins.

5. Laugh.

Find the humor in the situation. If you want to have fun, sometimes you just have to make fun. Look for the blessing in the mess.

If you need help managing stress-related medical symptoms, call:

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Stop
Breathe
Reflect
Choose