



Signs of Stress

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks, a few months or longer. Knowing what stress reactions to look for in yourself and others is the first step in managing your mental health. On this page is a guide to sorting out the different ways in which stress presents itself. On the next page, learn strategies for self-care and tips on how to lend a hand to colleagues, friends and family members.

| PHYSICAL SIGNS | COGNITIVE SIGNS | EMOTIONAL SIGNS | BEHAVIORAL SIGNS |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Fatigue | Blaming someone | Anxiety | Change in activity |
| Nausea | Confusion | Guilt | Change in speech patterns |
| Muscle tremors | Poor attention | Grief | Withdrawal |
| Twitches | Poor decisions | Denial | Emotional outbursts |
| Chest pain | Heightened or lowered alertness | Severe panic (rare) | Suspiciousness |
| Difficulty breathing | Poor concentration | Emotional shock | Change in usual communications |
| Elevated blood pressure | Memory problems | Fear | Loss or increase of appetite |
| Rapid heart rate | Hypervigilance | Uncertainty | Alcohol consumption |
| Thirst | Difficulty identifying familiar objects or people | Loss of emotional control | Inability to rest |
| Visual difficulties | Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings | Depression | Anti-social acts |
| Vomiting | Poor problem-solving | Inappropriate emotional response | Nonspecific bodily complaints |
| Grinding of teeth | Poor abstract thinking | Apprehension | Hyperalert to environment |
| Weakness | Loss of time, place or person orientation | Intense anger | Startle reflex intensified |
| | Disturbed thinking | Feeling overwhelmed | Pacing |
| | Nightmares | Irritability | Erratic movements |
| | Intrusive images | Agitation | Change in sexual functioning |

Strategies for Self-Care and How to Help Others

Coping strategies can make you a better ally to yourself and others who might be struggling with stress and the aftermath of trauma.

For yourself

Give yourself permission and time to grieve

Get enough rest

Reduce expectations about your level of productivity for a while

Be understanding and tolerant of others' reactions, remembering that people react differently

Seek help from professionals if severe traumatic stress symptoms persist

Eat healthy meals and exercise

Ask for support and help from your family, friends, church, therapist or other community resources

Set small realistic goals to help tackle obstacles, e.g., reestablish daily routines for yourself and your family

Continue to educate yourself and family about normal reactions to a disaster

Take breaks from media coverage of crises

For your colleagues, friends and family members

Talk to your children — be supportive and assist them in expressing their reactions to traumatic events

Listen carefully

Reassure them that they are safe

Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family or minding the children

Don't take their anger or other feelings personally

Consider helping others in need when you feel ready

Spend time with the traumatized person

Offer your assistance and a listening ear if they have not asked for help

Give them some private time

Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse"—traumatized people are not consoled by those statements; instead tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred, and you want to understand and assist them



For 24/7 Support: Contact Magellan's Employee Assistance Program.