

factsheet 1: stress & wellbeing



What is stress?

Stress can mean different things to different people. Stress is often defined as a mismatch between the demands placed on us and our ability to cope with these demands. The way we cope with these demands will depend on the way we think, our personality and our previous life experiences.

Stress is difficult to measure, but we all know what it feels like and how we cope in stressful situations. For some, it can threaten to take over their lives. While for

others, once they are aware of its causes and effects, stress can add excitement and challenge to their lives. It can be positive when it motivates us to get things done, however, it can be negative when we feel constantly pressurised or traumatised by too many demands.

What causes stress?

Over the course of our lives, inevitably we face unavoidable challenging events and situations: financial worries, unemployment, work related difficulties, family and relationship difficulties, parenting, physical health problems, being bullied, bereavement, the list is endless but the reaction, simply because we are human is often the same, we feel stressed.

Most of the time with some help and support we can take these things in our stride and an optimal level of stress can motivate us to get things done and actually improve our performance.

However, if everything is coming at us at once and we are endlessly trying to juggle multiple tasks which compete for our limited amount of time and energy the earlier we recognise there might be a problem the earlier we can do something about it.



some simple steps to help manage stress...

Eat well

Good food and regular meals provide the energy you need to deal effectively with stress.

Be active

We all know staying active is good for us. However, it doesn't mean you have to run a marathon or join a high tech mirrored gym. Cardio vascular activity such as taking a brisk walk for 30 minutes three days a week will not only reduce stress levels but also reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

Sleep well

Good sleep is essential for our bodies and minds to recover, but can be the first thing to go when we are stressed. This leads to tiredness and fatigue leaving us feeling even more stressed.

Chill and have fun

Taking a break from your hectic life, even a short one can prevent stress from building up and provide some breathing space to recharge your batteries and recover. Making time to relax and have some fun is an important way of beating stress.

Meditation and deep relaxation

Learning how to clear our minds takes practice but it's a really good way to relax, refresh and recover from the stresses and strains of daily life. You can sign up for a class or equally download an app. Experiment until you find a particular technique that works for you and then build it into your daily routine.

REMEMBER: If you are feeling highly stressed all or most of the time we recommend you speak to a Doctor.

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