

Stress

What Is Stress?

Stress is a feeling of strain and pressure. In small amounts stress can be beneficial, and even healthy, helping us to improve, be motivated and achieve our goals. When the feeling of pressure reaches a point where we start to worry about it and it bothers us, we call it excessive stress. This kind of stress may lead to bodily harm, increasing the risk of strokes, heart attacks, ulcers and mental illnesses such as depression.

How Can It Affect Me?

If you are stressed you can feel tense, anxious, upset, hopeless, helpless, worthless, guilty, irritable, angry and restless. You may feel you can't cope or don't have the resources to deal with what you have been asked to deal with, whether at work or facing a life event such as moving house, divorce or having a child. You may experience loss of appetite or overeating, be tense and unable to relax, have problems concentrating, remembering details or making decisions. Stress can also cause sleep problems fatigue, aches, pains, digestive problems or reduced energy.

How Can I Help Myself?

Writing a journal can help you to get your feelings out.

Relaxation can help with muscle tension and gives you a chance to have time away from the issue.

Exercise regularly as this helps with sleep disturbance and helps you relax.

Meditation can be useful to control and challenge your thought patterns if they get stuck or wander on their own, helping you to concentrate .

Talking things through with a friend or a counsellor can help you to work through your stress and support you to make helpful changes to reduce your stress.

What Do I Do If It Gets Too Much?

If you are finding it difficult to help yourself, your stress is not going away or you are having trouble sleeping you should make an appointment to see your GP. They can talk through options with you including medication, counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy or a combination of these therapies, all of which can be very effective.

If you choose to use a private counsellor make sure they are BACP or NCS registered. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the National Counselling Society hold the voluntary registers for counsellors and psychotherapists so you know that anyone registered with them has the appropriate training and qualifications to treat you.

Make an appointment today

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