

Taking steps to manage stress better

Experiencing stress is a normal part of everyday life and too much stress doesn't just make you feel bad, it can also be bad for your health. But there are steps to take to help manage it better.

Pressure and stress

Stress is the feeling of being under too much mental or emotional pressure. Too much stress can lead to a feeling of being unable to cope.

For example, dealing with changing demands and pressures from different areas in our lives, such as children's needs, money worries, relationships or concerns about work.

If you think you're suffering from [work-related stress](#) you should speak to your employer.

Common signs of stress include:

- sleeping problems
- sweating
- loss of appetite
- difficulty concentrating

You may feel anxious, irritable, low in self-esteem, have racing thoughts, worry constantly or go over things in your head.

People have different ways of reacting to stress, so a situation that feels stressful to one person may be motivating to someone else.

Stress is not an illness itself, but it can cause serious illness if it is not addressed.

Sometimes when stress is severe it can lead to burnout, with extreme emotional and physical exhaustion.

Dealing with stress

There are some practical steps you can take to deal with stress:

- learn how to relax: listen to music or go for a walk – taking steps to unwind can help stop stress building up
- eat well: during periods of stress it is more important than ever to eat well, as healthy eating can have a positive effect on your emotional wellbeing
- take regular exercise: being active can really help, so take a stroll, get out with the kids or with friends, or take the dog for a walk
- talk to someone: talking about your feelings can really help identify

what is causing the additional stress

- work through your problems: taking steps to deal with your problems will make you better able to cope with them

The key is to take positive action before stress really begins to affect your health and wellbeing.

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