



STRESS

HOW TO MANAGE YOUR STRESS:

- **GET MOVING:** Regular exercise can lift your mood and serve as a distraction from worries, allowing you to break out of the cycle of negative thoughts that feed stress. Walking, running, swimming, and dancing are particularly effective.
- **CONNECT TO OTHERS:** The simple act of talking face-to-face with another human can trigger hormones that relieve stress when you're feeling agitated or insecure. So, spend time with people who improve your mood and don't let your responsibilities keep you from having a social life.
- **ENGAGE YOUR SENSES:** Does listening to an uplifting song make you feel calm? Or smelling coffee? Or maybe petting an animal works quickly to make you feel centered? Everyone responds to sensory input a little differently, so experiment to find what works best for you.
- **LEARN TO RELAX:** You can't completely eliminate stress from your life, but you can control how much it affects you. Yoga, meditation, and deep breathing activate the body's relaxation response.

- **EAT A HEALTHY DIET:** The food you eat can improve or worsen your mood and affect your ability to cope with life's stressors. A diet rich in fresh fruit and vegetables, high-quality protein, and omega-3 fatty acids, can help you better cope with life's ups and downs.
- **GET YOUR REST:** Feeling tired can increase stress by causing you to think irrationally. At the same time, chronic stress can disrupt your sleep. There are plenty of ways to improve your sleep so you feel less stressed and more productive and emotionally balanced.

While there are promising treatments for stress, the management of stress is mostly dependent on the ability and willingness of a person to make the changes necessary for a healthy lifestyle.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ANY HELP VISIT
District Mental Health Program, District Hospital



National
Mental Health
Program



National Mental Health Program
Department of Health & Family Welfare
Nagaland: Kohima

What is Stress?



Stress is a normal part of life that can either help us learn and grow or can cause us significant problems. Stress releases powerful neurochemicals and hormones that prepare us for action (to fight or flee). If we don't take action, the stress response can create or worsen health problems. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. You can experience stress from your environment, your body, and your thoughts. Even positive life changes such as a promotion or the birth of a child produce stress. While there are promising treatments for stress, the management of stress is mostly dependent on the ability and willingness of a person to make the changes necessary for a healthy lifestyle.

HOW DOES STRESS AFFECT HEALTH?

The human body is designed to experience stress and react to it. Stress can be positive, keeping us alert, motivated, and ready to avoid danger. Stress becomes negative when a person faces continuous challenges without relief or relaxation between stressors. As a result, the person becomes overworked, and stress-related tension builds. If we don't take action, the stress response can create or worsen health problems. Prolonged, uninterrupted, unexpected, and unmanageable stresses are the most damaging.

Stress also becomes harmful when people engage in the compulsive use of substances or behaviors to try to relieve their stress. These substances or behaviors include food, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, gambling and the internet.

COMMON CAUSES OF STRESS:

- Being unhappy in your job.
- Having a heavy workload or too much responsibility.
- Working long hours.
- Having poor management, unclear expectations of your work, or lack in decision-making process.



- Working under pressure.
- Being insecure about your chance for advancement or risk of termination.
- Having to give speeches in front of your colleagues.
- Facing discrimination or harassment at work.

WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS?

- Dizziness or a general feeling of "being out of it."
- General aches and pains.
- Grinding teeth, clenched jaw.
- Headaches.
- Indigestion or acid reflux symptoms.
- Increase in or loss of appetite.
- Muscle tension in neck, face or shoulders.
- Problem sleeping.
- Racing heart.
- Cold and sweaty palms.
- Tiredness, exhaustion.
- Trembling/shaking.
- Weight gain or loss.
- Upset stomach or diarrhea.



FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE YOUR STRESS TOLERANCE LEVEL INCLUDE:

• YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK:

A strong network of supportive friends and family members is an enormous buffer against stress. The lonelier and more isolated you are, the greater your risk of succumbing to stress.

• YOUR SENSE OF CONTROL:

If you believe that you have little control over your life, stress is more likely to knock you off course.

• YOUR ATTITUDE AND OUTLOOK:

The way you look at life and its inevitable challenges makes a huge difference in your ability to handle stress. If you're generally hopeful and optimistic, you'll be less vulnerable.

• YOUR ABILITY TO DEAL WITH YOUR EMOTIONS:

Having the ability to identify and deal appropriately with your emotions can increase your tolerance to stress and help you bounce back from adversity.