



THRIVE GUIDE

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Do you know the signs and causes of stress? We'll cover that in this guide as well as tell you how to prevent and manage stress and support others.



SIGNS & CAUSES



PREVENT & MANAGE



SUPPORT OTHERS

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What is stress?

Stress - it's something we all experience, and more importantly, it's normal.

It is important to recognise the difference between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' stress. Healthy stress can enhance performance and gives us that extra push we need to get things done. However, when stress starts to affect our ability to cope with everyday life, it's time to do something about it. Unhealthy stress is chronic, and it poses as a serious risk to both our mental and physical health.

With the number of people experiencing dysfunctional stress rising each year, and **one of the main causes of stress being work** it's no surprise people are finding it hard to cope.

So, what exactly is stress?

Stress has two components:

- A situation that we feel puts pressure on us, for example something unexpected happening.
- Our perceptions and emotional reactions to this pressure. These can either be constructive (e.g. learning from experience), or destructive (e.g. inability to cope with the demands placed on us).

What causes stress?

This question has many answers, as everyone reacts to situations differently. What is stressful for one, may not be stressful to another.

The most common stressors include:



Work



Money worries



**Relationships
& children**



Life events
such as divorce,
unemployment or
moving house



**A series of minor
irritations**
such as feeling
undervalued at work



**Feeling things are
out of your control**



Unsupported
Not having the
resources or support
to cope with a
situation

THE STATISTICS

Stress in adults

85%

of adults experience stress regularly.

74%

of UK adults have felt so stressed at some point over the last year they felt overwhelmed or unable to cope. (2018)

32%

of adults said they had experienced suicidal feelings as a result of stress. (2018)

Stress at work

79%

of adults in employment commonly experienced work-related stress in 2020 (20% higher than 2018's findings).

Work-related stress has climbed to its highest rate in **16 YEARS**



Main causes of work-related stress are **workload pressures, tight deadlines, too much responsibility and a lack of managerial support.**

4 IN 10

'sick notes' handed out by GPs are now for mental health problems, including stress.



17.9
MILLION

working days lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety accounting for **55% of all lost working days** in 2019/20.

Stress in ages



18 - 24
MONEY



25 - 34
WORK



35 - 54
WORK & MONEY



55+
HEALTH

The signs of stress

EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF STRESS

- Irritable, aggressive and impatient
- Easily agitated, frustrated and mood
- Burned out
- Anxious, nervous or afraid
- Unable to switch off
- Unable to enjoy yourself
- Uninterested in life
- Loss of sense of humour
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Having difficulty relaxing
- Low self-esteem
- Avoiding others
- Feeling depressed and down
- Neglected or lonely



BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS OF STRESS



- Finding it hard to make decisions
- Avoiding situations and people
- Snapping at people
- Biting your nails
- Being regularly tearful or crying
- Feeling restless
- Picking at your skin
- Unable to concentrate
- Eating too much or too little
- Smoking or drinking alcohol more than usual

PHYSICAL SIGNS OF STRESS

- Low energy and constantly tired
- Headaches
- Upset stomach (diarrhoea/constipation)
- Aches, pains, and tense muscles
- Chest pain and rapid heartbeat
- Insomnia
- Frequent colds and infections
- Loss of sexual desire and/or ability
- Shallow breathing or hyperventilating
- Panic attacks
- Indigestion or heartburn
- Feeling sick, dizzy or fainting
- Excess sweating
- Dry mouth and difficulty swallowing
- Clenched jaw and grinding teeth
- Nervousness and shaking



Easy ways to manage stress

Now we know the problem and the signs, it's time to **learn how to prevent and manage stress**. As many things are, it's easier said than done, but we believe that once you perfect the skill of self management, it becomes easier.

1. ORGANISE YOUR TIME

Make lists, plans and daily calendars! Time management is key to helping you feel in control and able to handle pressure.

2. CONNECT WITH PEOPLE

Friends, family and colleagues make a great support network. All you need to do is reach out.

3. ADDRESS THE CAUSES

You can't change everything, but there might be ways to resolve or improve an issue. Make a plan to tackle tasks, working through them one at a time.

4. BE ACTIVE

Exercise won't make stress disappear, but it will clear your thoughts which helps when dealing with stress.

5. HAVE 'ME TIME'

Everyone needs time to do the things they love and to simply relax. Be sure to make time for this each week.

6. CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

All stress is perceived. Some people cope with difficult situations, others struggle with small challenges. Cognitive Behavioural skills help you a healthy perspective on things.

THRIVE: MENTAL WELLBEING

One of the keys to a healthy mind is to **build a resilience to stress**. This can be done in many ways, but of course now is the best time to use Thrive - a handy app teaching you exactly that.

You can learn relaxation techniques, identify triggers, distract your mind with games, screen for mental health conditions, and so much more.



Supporting someone who is overly stressed

Sometimes, when it comes to helping others we can feel a little lost, especially when it comes to mental health and emotional wellbeing. However, if someone is showing signs of being stressed there are actually lots of things you can do to support them.

Listen to how they are feeling. Having a chance to talk openly could help someone to feel calmer and more able to move forward. Just being there for them will be a bigger help than you may think.

- ✓ **Reassure them** that stressful situations can pass
- ✓ Help them to **identify the triggers** of their stress
- ✓ Help them to **address some causes** of stress, if you can
- ✓ Help them to **learn and practise relaxation techniques**
- ✓ Support them to **seek professional help**
- ✓ **Look after yourself** - it's harder to help someone when you are not feeling 100%



LISTEN



TALK



SUPPORT

Additional support

“

"One of the keys to managing stress is realising that **it's okay to reach out** and **accepting support** from those that are there to help you"

- **Dr Andres Fonseca**

Consultant Psychiatrist, CEO and Co-Founder of Thrive

Links for more information

[MIND.ORG.UK](https://www.mind.org.uk)

Support on a range of mental health conditions.

[NHS.CO.UK](https://www.nhs.co.uk)

Information and tips on managing stress in the workplace.

Numbers to call

MIND

[0300 123 3393](tel:03001233393)

Lines are open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays).

SAMARITANS

[116 123](tel:116123) (24 hours a day)



Thrive: Mental Wellbeing App

An app to help you prevent, screen and manage stress and other mental health conditions.

Download the app now by scanning the QR code or via the Apple or Android app store. Sign up using your company access code.

