

6 ways to manage chronic stress



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By Health Shield's Wellbeing Team

Surveys show that 79% of people feel frequently stressed at work, which puts them at risk of chronic stress¹.

This alarming statistic raises many questions. What is chronic stress exactly? How can you identify the physical and psychological symptoms? And what can you do to manage your stress to avoid burnout and related illnesses?

Chronic stress is a condition in which a person experiences stress [repeatedly or for long periods of time](#). It's a state of mental and physical exhaustion caused by an inability to cope with the demands and expectations placed upon a person. Chronic stress can vary in duration from weeks to months, and has a wide range of effects on the body. Here are six areas to look at if you're starting to feel the pressure. Let's take a look.

Six areas to look at if you're frequently stressed:

1 Exercise

Exercise is an excellent way to manage stress because it releases endorphins, which are natural mood boosters. Even a 30-minute walk can help reduce stress levels.

2 Meditation

Meditation is a practice that can help calm the mind and reduce stress. Studies have shown that regular meditation can help reduce anxiety, depression, and stress.

3 Sleep

Getting enough sleep is crucial for managing stress. Chronic stress can disrupt sleep, so it is important to establish a regular sleep routine.

4 Healthy eating

Eating a healthy diet is essential for maintaining physical and mental health. A balanced diet can help reduce stress and provide the body with the nutrients it needs to function properly.

5 Social support

Having a strong support system can help manage stress. Spending time with friends and family can help reduce stress levels and provide a sense of belonging..

6 Seek professional help

If chronic stress is impacting your life, it is important to seek professional help. A therapist or counselor can provide support and guidance to help manage stress and improve mental health.

Chronic stress is a serious condition that can negatively impact both physical and mental health. Common signs of chronic stress to watch out for include:

Mental and physical fatigue - feelings of constant tiredness or weakness that can be caused by an increase in work production and pressure.

Problems with concentration and memory - feeling foggy and unable to maintain focus.

Headaches and migraines - tension headaches are the most common type of headache for people experiencing chronic stress and they can often become quite disabling and distressing.

Suppression of the immune system - you might start to notice an increase in the number of colds or other illnesses you're catching.

Anxiety and depression - stress-related mental health issues range from social anxiety to agoraphobia (fear of entering or being involved in a crowded environment) OCD, PTSD and body dysmorphia.

Insomnia - insomnia is one of the biggest signs when it comes to stress. For many, the inability to switch off at night and relax is overwhelming.

Don't be afraid to reach out, communicate with your friends, partner or professional and get the help you need. It's important that we speak about mental health. And if you notice any of these signs in your friends, family, loved ones or even work colleagues, try opening up a line of communication with them about how they're feeling and if there's anything you can do to help. A problem shared is a problem halved.

¹ Personnel Today

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