

## What should I do if I think I am becoming stressed?

If you think you are suffering from any of the symptoms listed, or feel you may be developing a stress related problem:

- speak to your GP at the earliest opportunity
- it is also advisable to raise your concerns with your line manager or P and O.

Help is also available through the Wood Employee Assistance Programme. This is a free confidential service where you can not only obtain counselling support but also advice in regards to the many factors which can contribute to stress.

### Stress Management suggestions:

- Being active – helps release endorphins which improves your mood
- Having some me time – make sure you make time to do something you enjoy
- Connecting with family and friends – talking through problems may help you find a solution to your problems
- Setting yourself goals and challenges – learning something new helps build your confidence
- Avoiding unhealthy habits – cut down on smoking and alcohol intake
- Work smarter, not harder –prioritise your work, do first the things which make a difference
- Learn relaxation techniques and make sure you take regular breaks



## STRESS CAN BE MANAGED

The first step is to identify where it is coming from and then find ways to reduce it

## Useful Links:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/reduce-stress/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/how-to-stress/>

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN/TCS.htm>

### How to Access YOUR Employee Assistance Programme

#### Telephone

0800 917 9330

Any time of day or night. You will be asked which company you work for.

#### Website: [www.myemployee care.com](http://www.myemployee care.com)

Use the username **72221** and password **employee care** to access the website.

**App:** Download the mobile app from the Apple App or Google Play stores; simply search 'LifeWorks' and look for the LifeWorks logo. Use the username **72221** and password **employee care** to access the app.

### What relaxation techniques can I do?

Relaxation can help relieve the symptoms of stress. It can help you calm down and take a step back from a stressful situation.

Although the cause of the stress won't disappear, it will help you feel more able to deal with it once you've released the tension in your body and cleared your thoughts.

There are 2 main ways of relaxing – either doing relaxed breathing or deep muscle relaxation. Both are learned techniques – but it only take a short time to master them.

Further information on this can be obtained from: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/ways-relieve-stress.aspx>

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## Wood's Guide to Stress



Stress: The facts

Stress is not an illness or even a medical diagnosis in itself, however, if stress becomes too excessive and prolonged, mental and physical illness can develop.



**Stress has been defined as:**  
“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed upon them”.

This definition makes the important distinction between the beneficial effects of reasonable pressures or challenges which can act as a motivational factor and stress which is the natural but distressing reaction to too much pressure and occurs when this pressure is excessive.

Stress can arise due to either **personal** or **work related** factors though more commonly arises as a combination of both.

**NOTE – we all have a different thresholds to stress – what one person finds stressful, another finds normal**

### So what factors are involved in stress?

How you assess and respond to pressures or challenges depends on a number of factors including:

- your background and culture
- your skills and experience
- your personality
- your personal circumstances
- your individual characteristics
- your health status

- other demands on you both in and outside of work

When considering work-related factors, the HSE has identified six features that can lead

- The **Demands** of your job
- Your **Control** over your work
- The **Support** you receive from managers and colleagues
- Your **Relationships** at work
- Your **Role** within the organisation
- **Change** and how it's managed



- Having control over your workload can reduce the impact of the work **demands**
- Having support from your colleagues and managers can reduce the impact of high demands and low **control** – so speak to them about the issues you are having
- One of the biggest sources of stress can be **relationships**, especially bullying and harassment. These are unacceptable behaviours –so speak early to your HR Advisor or Line Manager if you perceive this is happening to you
- Problems connected to your **role** and responsibilities can be one of the easiest factors to address – again speak to your Line Manager to get this clarified

- **Change**, be it at organisational level, or within a team, as well as changes to your type of work, or technology used are all recognised as potential stressors – so ensure good lines of communication to advise what is happening recognised

### What symptoms can be associated with stress?

Stress can produce a wide range of signs and symptoms. If you recognise that you have developed any of these it may indicate stress and you should seek further advice from your GP. Anyone can suffer from stress – identifying early on the impacts on you as a consequence of stress offers the best chance of preventing the development of mental or physical illnesses.

#### **Behaviour**

- Difficulty sleeping
- A change in your eating habits
- Smoking or drinking more
- Avoiding friends and family

#### **Physical symptoms**

- Tiredness
- Indigestion and nausea
- Headaches
- Aching muscles
- Palpitations

#### **Mentally**

- Becoming more indecisive
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Suffering loss of memory
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Low self esteem

#### **Emotionally**

- Becoming easily irritable or angry
- Increased anxiousness
- Feeling numb, drained or listless
- Increased hypersensitivity