

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is our body's reaction to an event or change. To some degree it is part of our every day life. Each day we experience it in some way – when we deal with traffic, can't find something, sleep past the alarm, company arrives unexpectedly... Even positive changes in our lives can result in stress – moving, getting married, starting a new job...

Every person has different levels of stress in their lives. What is stressful for one person may not be stressful for another. Every person reacts to stress differently.



In small doses, stress can be beneficial. It gives you a boost of energy. It makes you more alert. It keeps you focused.

As the level of stress increases or if it persists, it can be a problem. Stress can affect our physical and mental functioning. It becomes harder for us to handle. We may become less able to cope with it in a positive way.

How does stress make you feel?

Initially, your heart beats faster and you will breathe faster. You are preparing to meet the challenge. Over the longer term, you may feel angry or helpless. You can also have a headache, aches in you neck, jaw or back, have difficulty sleeping and have problems with weight gain or weight loss.

It's important to handle stress in a positive and healthy way. If you can remove yourself from the stress – do it. If that is not possible, develop a plan to help you manage the stress.