

Useful Information:

Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

No Panic: www.nopanic.org.uk

MIND: www.mind.org.uk

HSE: www.hse.gov.uk/stress

Stress Management Society: www.stress.org.uk

One You: www.nhs.uk/oneyou/stress

Support Line: www.supportline.org.uk/problems/stress

Rethink Mental Illness: www.rethink.org.uk

An information booklet on coping with stress



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Staff Health and Wellbeing

What is stress?

Stress is the way that you feel when pressure is placed on you.

A little bit of pressure can be productive, give you motivation, and help you to perform better at something. However, too much pressure or prolonged pressure can lead to stress, which is unhealthy for the mind and the body.

Everyone reacts differently to stress and some people may have a higher threshold than others. Too much stress often leads to physical, mental and emotional problems.

Stress Management

Your GP should be able to recommend various stress management techniques for you to practice when you feel yourself getting stressed. Stress Management is designed to help you to recognize when you are becoming stressed again. There are several ways that stress can be prevented.

Counselling

You should speak to your GP and Staff Health and Wellbeing Department if you feel that you are stressed and under too much pressure.

The Staff Health and Wellbeing Department are able to refer you to the confidential employee assistance provider Care First. Care First provide a range of support around a variety of issues and can be accessed via the telephone, internet or android app.

To access www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk

User Name: mku001

Password: ital1234

Diagnosis

Your GP will usually be able to diagnose stress based on your symptoms alone. However, they may want to run some tests such as a blood or urine, or a health assessment.

This is so your GP can rule out any underlying conditions that may be causing your symptoms. Your GP may also ask about your family history and your personal life.

Treatment

Some people are often unwilling to ask for help if they feel stressed. They may feel embarrassed, or that they should be able to deal with stress of their own. However, if you are stressed, it is important to speak to someone about your feelings, particularly if they are interfering with the way that you live your life.

Identifying the cause or causes of your stress is a positive step. Speaking to someone about your feelings may help you to identify the causes of stress, or any other underlying causes.

Support for our staff

Peer 2 Peer (P2P) is a listening service for staff, enabling staff to share and get support from colleagues in a confidential environment, whether it's work related or something else.

There are a number of 'listeners' around the Trust who can be identified by their green P2P badge who have been trained in listening skills but are not acting as counsellors. Please feel free to stop them in the corridor for a chat any time.

Take 5: This scheme allows you the opportunity to take a five minute break in a quiet space to collect your thoughts. This will be in the chapel and is available at any time for any member of staff to take a breather without interruption.

Where possible, please ensure you notify your line manager if you are temporarily leaving the department.

Staff Health and Wellbeing Department: if you are feeling stressed or anxious then you are able to self-refer to talk to one of the practitioners. Alternatively your manager is able to refer you to the department for support.

Causes

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations, and a situation the one person finds stressful may not be stressful to someone else. Some of the common causes of stress include:

- Money matters
- Job issues
- Relationships
- Bereavement
- Family disputes

Prevention

Being able to identify what is causing stress is an important step in preventing it. Identifying the triggers will enable you to take steps to avoid them and will help you to recognise when you are becoming stressed again.

There are several ways that stress can be prevented which can include deep breathing, healthy eating, exercise, sleep, quitting smoking and relaxation.

Symptoms

Stress affects different people in different ways, and everyone has a different method of dealing with it.

The chemicals that are released by your body as a result of stress can build up over time and cause various mental and physical symptoms.

Mental symptoms can include anger, depression, and anxiety, changes in behavior, difficulty in sleeping, feeling tired and difficulty concentrating.

Physical symptoms can include chest pains, cramps or muscle spasms, dizziness, fainting spells, nail biting, feeling restless, sexual difficulties, breathlessness and difficulty sleeping.

If you have been experiencing some of these symptoms for a long period of time you are at a risk of developing high blood pressure which can lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Experiencing even one or two of these symptoms can make you feel frustrated or anxious. This can be a vicious cycle- for example, you want to avoid stress but symptoms such as frequent crying or nervous twitching can make you feel annoyed with yourself and even more stressed.