



# Signs of Stress

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks, a few months or longer. Knowing what stress reactions to look for in yourself and others is the first step in managing your mental health. On this page is a guide to sorting out the different ways in which stress presents itself. On the next page, learn strategies for self-care and tips on how to lend a hand to colleagues, friends and family members.

PHYSICAL SIGNS	COGNITIVE SIGNS	EMOTIONAL SIGNS	BEHAVIORAL SIGNS
Fatigue	Blaming someone	Anxiety	Change in activity
Nausea	Confusion	Guilt	Change in speech patterns
Muscle tremors	Poor attention	Grief	Withdrawal
Twitches	Poor decisions	Denial	Emotional outbursts
Chest pain	Heightened or lowered alertness	Severe panic (rare)	Suspiciousness
Difficulty breathing	Poor concentration	Emotional shock	Change in usual communications
Elevated blood pressure	Memory problems	Fear	Loss or increase of appetite
Rapid heart rate	Hypervigilance	Uncertainty	Alcohol consumption
Thirst	Difficulty identifying familiar objects or people	Loss of emotional control	Inability to rest
Visual difficulties	Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings	Depression	Anti-social acts
Vomiting	Poor problem-solving	Inappropriate emotional response	Nonspecific bodily complaints
Grinding of teeth	Poor abstract thinking	Apprehension	Hyperalert to environment
Weakness	Loss of time, place or person orientation	Intense anger	Startle reflex intensified
	Disturbed thinking	Feeling overwhelmed	Pacing
	Nightmares	Irritability	Erratic movements
	Intrusive images	Agitation	Change in sexual functioning

# Strategies for Self-Care and How to Help Others

Coping strategies can make you a better ally to yourself and others who might be struggling with stress and the aftermath of trauma.

## For yourself

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Give yourself permission and time to grieve

Get enough rest

Reduce expectations about your level of productivity for a while

Be understanding and tolerant of others' reactions, remembering that people react differently

Seek help from professionals if severe traumatic stress symptoms persist

Eat healthy meals and exercise

Ask for support and help from your family, friends, church, therapist or other community resources

Set small realistic goals to help tackle obstacles, e.g., reestablish daily routines for yourself and your family

Continue to educate yourself and family about normal reactions to a disaster

Take breaks from media coverage of crises

## For your colleagues, friends and family members

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Talk to your children — be supportive and assist them in expressing their reactions to traumatic events

Listen carefully

Reassure them that they are safe

Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family or minding the children

Don't take their anger or other feelings personally

Consider helping others in need when you feel ready

Spend time with the traumatized person

Offer your assistance and a listening ear if they have not asked for help

Give them some private time

Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse"—traumatized people are not consoled by those statements; instead tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred, and you want to understand and assist them



**For 24/7 Support:** Contact Magellan's Employee Assistance Program.