

STRESS REACTIONS

Stress reactions are highly individual. There is no one “right way” to react to stressful events. Below are some common reactions to stress. You may experience very strong feelings immediately, or feel little impact. You may also find yourself reacting later, with feelings that come and go or are different from what you expected. Recognizing stress early can help you prevent long-term effects. Remember that stress reactions are **normal**, a sign of humanity, not of weakness.

COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL	BEHAVIORAL	PHYSICAL
blaming others	anxiety	change in daily routine	fatigue
blaming yourself	guilt	change in speech	nausea
confusion	grief	isolation	twitches
poor attention	denial	change in relating to others	tremors
poor decisions	severe panic	change in sexual function	trouble with coordination
hyper- or lower alertness	emotional block	startle reaction	chest pain*
poor concentration	fear	change in usual patterns	difficulty breathing*
memory problems	uncertainty	of communication	elevated BP
hyper-vigilance	loss of emotional control	loss / increase appetite	thirst
trouble identifying familiar	depression	increase alcohol / drug use	headaches
persons, places, things	emotional numbing	inability to rest	visual problems
increased or decreased	apprehension	antisocial acts	vomiting
awareness of	feeling overwhelmed	pacing	grinding of teeth
surroundings	intense anger	erratic movement	weakness
poor problem-solving	irritability	repetitive behaviors	dizziness
poor abstract thinking	agitation	“checking”	profuse sweating
loss of time/place			chills
orientation			fainting*
flashbacks			nonspecific bodily
nightmares			complaints
intrusive memories			rapid heart rate
intrusive sensory data			
obsessive thoughts about			
the event			

*** INDICATES NEED
FOR MEDICAL
EVALUATION**