

## Common Signs and Signals of a Stress Reaction

US Public Health Service

Physical	Mental	Emotional	Behavioral
Fatigue	Tendency to Blame Others	Anxiety	Changes in Normal Activities
Insomnia	Confusion	Grief	Change in Speech
Muscle Tremors	Poor Attention	Survivor Guilt/Self-Blame	Withdrawal from Others
Twitches	Poor Concentration	Denial	Emotional Outbursts
Difficulty Breathing	Heightened or Lower Alertness	Severe Pain (Rare)	Change in Communication
Elevated Blood Pressure	Inability to Make Decisions	Fear of Loss/of Going Crazy	Suspiciousness
Rapid Breathing	Forgetfulness	Uncertainty	Inability to Rest
Rapid Heartbeat	Trouble Identifying Known Objects or People	Loss of Emotional Control	Substance Abuse
Chest Pain	Increased or Decreased Awareness of Surroundings	Emotional Numbness	Intensified Startle Reflex
Headaches	Poor problem-solving	Depression	Antisocial Acts
Visual Difficulties	Loss of Sense of Time, Place or Person	Lack of Capacity for Enjoyment	Pacing
Nausea/Vomiting	Disturbed Thinking	Apprehension	Erratic Movements
Thirst	Nightmares	Intense Anger	Decreased Personal Hygiene
Hunger	Inescapable Images	Irritability	Diminished Sexual Drive
Dizziness	Flashbacks	Agitation	Appetite Disturbance
Excessive Sweating	Suicidal Ideas	Helplessness	Prolonged Silences
Chills	Disbelief	Mistrust	Accident Prone
Weakness	Change in Values	Feeling of Worthlessness	Increased Drug or Alcohol Use
Fainting	Search for Meaning	Apathy/Boredom	Avoiding Reminders of the Trauma

## Self-care Strategies

Stay away from mood-altering substances, including drugs and alcohol	Give yourself permission to feel bad
Eat well-balanced meals	Let yourself express emotions but do so appropriately
Get plenty of rest so that you feel rested and relaxed	Remind yourself that your reactions are normal
Take your breaks and lunches...away from your desk	Make small decisions daily to get control of your life back
Structure your time and develop a routine	Lower expectations on what you think you "should be doing"
Have someone you can talk to about your stress, frustrations and needs	Set reasonable goals
Give yourself permission to feel good or do something that could feel good to you	Remember it is OK to ask for help
Exercise – even a little bit	Engage in practices that are meaningful to you
Practice stress reduction techniques such as deep breathing, mediation and visualization	Contact the EAP for professional support (trauma services)