

Managing Stress

Stress is our response to challenging or dangerous situations. Experiencing stress is a normal part of life, and a small amount can sometimes be quite helpful, with increased levels of energy, alertness and performance assisting us to meet a particular challenge. Excessive amounts of stress however can lead to physical and mental health issues, as well as causing problems in areas of our lives such as relationships and work.

Managing Stress

- **Identify what is making you feel stressed, and any “triggers” (e.g. situations, thought processes) for increased feelings of stress.**
- **Consider changing or modifying the stressor if it is within your control to do so. For example, with work stress it may be possible to modify or change work hours and duties.**
- **Consider postponing major life decisions (e.g. moving house, changing careers etc.) unless this issue is the source of your stress.**
- **Regular physical exercise can help to relax the body and mind .**
- **Consider relaxation exercises involving deep breathing; muscle relaxation; yoga; meditation; mindfulness and music.**
- **Talk with a supportive friend or family member**
- **Maintain a healthy lifestyle including quality sleep and a healthy diet. Limit consumption of alcohol and other drugs.**

Symptoms of Stress

- Physical signs of stress include sleep disturbance; fatigue; stomach upset; headaches and muscle tension; high blood pressure; change in normal level of sex drive (libido); high blood pressure and lowered immunity.
- Psychological symptoms of stress can include excessive worry; irritability and anger; depressed mood; crying; sense of loss of control; difficulty concentrating and loss of self confidence.
- Behavioural changes associated with stress include angry outbursts; avoiding people; excessive use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; and relationship issues.
- When high levels of stress are experienced on an ongoing basis there is an increased risk of developing anxiety, depression and substance abuse issues.

Contact us to make an appointment to speak with a counsellor on 6223 56 12.

For more information go to:
www.beyondblue.org.au
www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
www.sane.org
www.headspace.org.au
www.lifeline.org.au