



10 Surprising Ways Stress Can Affect Your Body

We all have some level of stress in our lives. We know that mental and emotional stress can put a strain on our physical well-being such as feeling tired or having tightness around the back or shoulders, but stress can affect us in less obvious ways. Here are 10 surprising ways stress can affect the body.

Headaches - stress can trigger or intensify tension headaches

Heartburn - an increase in stomach acid production can potentially lead to heartburn

Rapid Breathing - muscles tighten due to stress, including those that help you breathe

Pounding Heart - stress hormones increase your heart rate

High Blood Pressure - stress hormones can also tighten blood vessels which can increase blood pressure

Insomnia - trouble falling asleep or staying asleep is a common stress related problem

High Blood Sugar - stress can cause your liver to release extra sugar into the bloodstream, over time this can put you at risk for type 2 diabetes

Gut Problems - stomachache and digestive problems (nausea, constipation, diarrhea) can be a result of stress

Fertility Problems - stress can mess with both the male and female reproductive system and make it harder to conceive

Decreased Libido - stress hormones and fatigue can wreak havoc with your sex drive

This list is by no means exhaustive, so if you are feeling not quite right, it might be a good time to check in and be honest with yourself about how you are handling the stress in your life. Below are a few simple ideas to help take control of your stress.

Exercise - even just one daily walk can reduce feelings of stress

Eat well and regularly - proper nutrition can improve digestive problems and fatigue

Slow down and take a break - a little time and space can put things into perspective

Find a hobby – a pastime you enjoy will help take your mind off other things, even for a short period of time, and gives you something to look forward to

Talk to someone – talking to a friend, a co-worker, or therapist can help to relieve stress