

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Common signs of stress

In tough times we can be more vulnerable to stress, worry, anxiety and depression. It's important to take care of ourselves. Tough times don't last. Tough people do.

At some point in our lives we all face tough times and we can be impacted directly or indirectly by such things as financial pressures or unexpected problems like what many Alberta farmers are facing with crop or livestock issues.

Remember, it's normal to feel stress from time to time in everyday life. Everyone who goes through stressful events can be affected in some way. Sometimes these stress reactions may not appear for weeks or months following an event. It is important to watch for warning signs.

The warning signs of stress can be physical or emotional. Some people call this "storing" stress in the body (physical) or in the mind (emotional).

Common physical symptoms of stress include:

- Rapid heartbeat.
- Headache.
- Stiff neck and/or tight shoulders.
- Backache.
- Rapid breathing.
- Sweating and sweaty palms.
- Upset stomach, nausea, or diarrhea.

You also may notice signs of stress in your thinking, behaviour, or mood. You may:

- Become irritable and intolerant of even minor disturbances.
- Feel irritated or frustrated, lose your temper more often, and yell at others for no reason.
- Feel jumpy or exhausted all the time.



- Find it hard to concentrate or focus on tasks.
- Worry too much about insignificant things.
- Doubt your ability to do things.
- Imagine negative, worrisome, or terrifying scenes.
- Feel you are missing opportunities because you cannot act quickly.

It's important to recognize signs of stress and know how to cope. Stress relief is different for each person. For some ideas to see which ones work for you visit: My Health Alberta at www.myhealth.alberta.ca and search managing stress.

If you are finding you are not coping well, contact Health Link at 811 to find help near you.