

## 9 Ways Stress Messes with Your Body

The side effects of stress might be scarier than whatever you're worried about. Stress really sucks. It sucks up your energy, your desire to get to the gym, and even your libido. And while some stress can help you kick butt when your body goes into fight-or-flight mode, daily stress can mess with your mind and body in serious ways. Check out these freaky symptoms of stress, and follow our pointers for how to mitigate these nasty side effects.

### 1 IT MAKES YOU EXHAUSTED

Aside from the fact that your anxiety might be keeping you up at night, freaking out triggers your brain to release the hormone cortisol into your bloodstream. This helpful chemical quickens your heartbeat, gives your brain more oxygen, and releases extra energy to help your body deal with that stress. But frequent stress can cause your brain to limit the amount of cortisol it sends into your bloodstream, which can make you feel like you're dragging butt all day, every day. **The good news is that about three hours a week of working out should keep those hormone levels in check. So what are you waiting for? Get moving!**

### 2. IT MESSES WITH YOUR LIBIDO

It's not a secret that when your mind is some place else, it can be hard to get in the mood to get busy. But that's not the only way stress impacts what's going down (or not) between the sheets. Chronic stress can impact your body's production of estrogen, which keeps your reproductive system in working order. When that happens you could feel a dip in your sex drive. Womp womp all around. **In times of stress, concentrate on eating a healthy diet and cutting back on processed foods to help ease this symptom.**

### 3. IT MAKES IT HARD FOR YOU TO POOP

Those knots in your stomach could be more than just an uneasy feeling. Chronic stress can impact the hormones released by your thyroid glands, which regulate your metabolism among other things. If these hormones get off track, it can lead to constipation. **When you're feeling this symptom, head to the gym, drink lots of fluids and increase your fiber intake.**

### 4. IT MAKES YOU BREAK OUT

When you're really freaking out, the level of sex hormones called androgens in your body spike, causing acne to flare up. In addition to zits on your face, stress can also show up on other parts of your skin in the form of rashes. That's because anxiety wreaks havoc on your immune system, which can make eczema act up or cause skin infections like staph. **Visit the naturopath for natural topical treatments to help with those issues.**

### 5. YOU CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING

Traumatic stress, meaning stress that occurs when you feel a threat to your life or a loved one's life and feels like intense fear or helplessness, seriously impacts your hippocampus, the area of your brain where your memories are stored. This kind of stress causes the hippocampus to actually shrink, making it tough to remember facts, lists, the entirety of an event, or long gaps of time (from minutes to days). Plus, damage from stress can make it hard to create new memories.

### 6. IT SCREWS WITH YOUR MANICURE

If you have a nasty habit of picking or biting your cuticles, it might be how your anxiety is rearing its ugly head. And besides ruining your perfectly manicured tips, picking at your fingers can lead to a nasty infection since you use your hands for pretty much everything. **To keep this anxious habit from affecting your nails, make sure you're moisturizing frequently and wearing bandages on your fingers to minimize the damage.**

### 7. IT MAKES YOU GAIN WEIGHT

A University of Kentucky study found that dieters who learned stress-management tactics were more successful at losing weight than dieters who didn't. The connection between reducing stress and losing weight could be that it helps cut back on stress-related binge eating. Plus, another study published in the journal Psychoneuroendocrinology found that women who were constantly stressed out metabolized fat and sugar differently than those who weren't anxiety-ridden.

### 8. YOU COULD LOSE SOME HAIR

Just as a spike in androgens can cause your skin to break out, it can also cause your hair to shed more than usual, usually three to six months after a super stressful situation. **The good news is that this unfortunate side effect should only be temporary, and a balanced diet can help the cells in your hair follicles heal back to normal.**

### 9. IT MAKES YOUR BACK ACHE

When you're stressing, your heart rate and blood pressure rise and your body pumps out hormones to help with your fight-or-flight response. This combo can cause your muscles to tighten up and amplify the aches you get from sitting at a desk all day. **You can combat stress-related back pain by standing up every hour and stretching and visiting your chiropractor.**

Chiropractic care can help you manage your stress. After all, chiropractic focuses on the spine, which is the root of the nervous system. One of the effects of chronic stress is muscle tension and contraction, which can lead to uneven pressure on the skeleton, which in turn leads to subluxations. Adjustments help ease muscle tension, which in turn eases the stress on certain parts of the skeleton and helps ease subluxations. Easing these subluxations — therefore achieving a balanced spine — is a crucial element of managing personal stress.

If you answered 'Yes' to any of the above, then consider visiting us so we can assess what the best option will be for you!

### WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP:

1. Contact our office on **9477 1905** and make an appointment for our **Stress Less Consultation**.
2. If you are unsure and would like to find out what we do and how we can help, book in for our **Jump Start Your Health** Workshop to gain a better understanding as to how to decrease stress from your life. Call us on 9477 1905 to book your ticket at **no charge**.