



The stress busting edition

In this month's newsletter we share techniques to better manage stress, tips on supporting a colleague with stressful situations, ways to help your child beat exam stress, and a quick guide to autism.

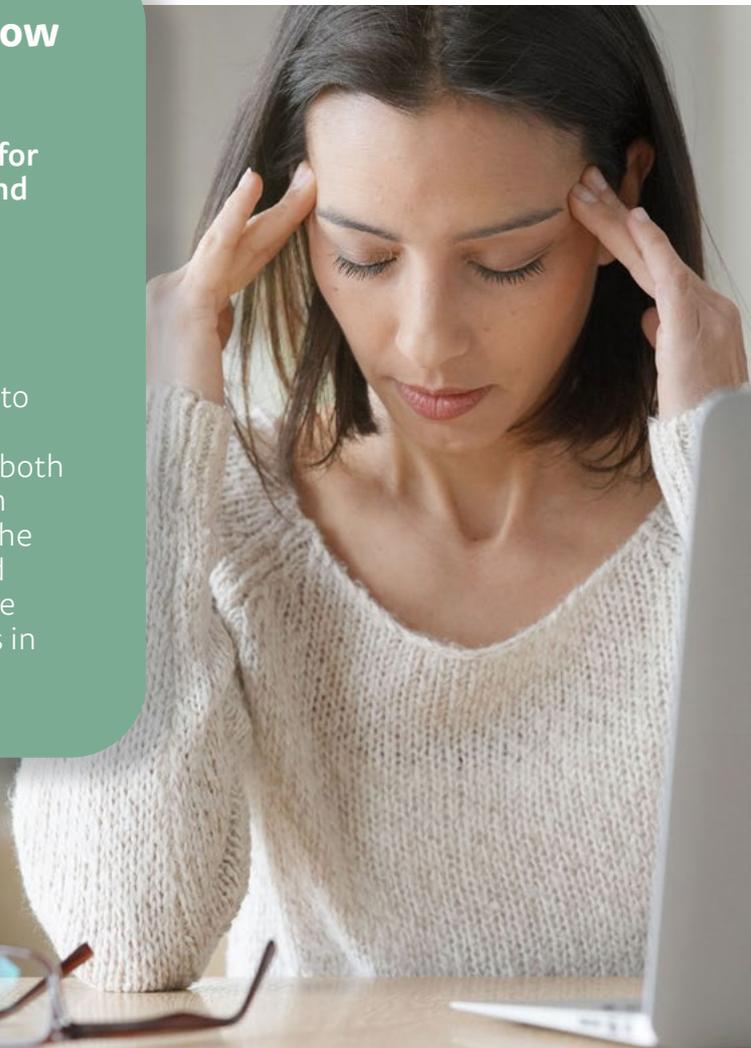
This newsletter includes information about sensitive and potentially triggering topics.

The impact of stress on the body and how you can help to reduce it

Stress Awareness Month has been held every April for the last 32 years to raise awareness of the causes and cures for our modern-day stress epidemic.

The body's response to stress is a natural defence mechanism, otherwise known as the 'fight' or 'flight' response. Despite this, many people feel a lot of guilt and shame around stress, particularly when it comes to mental health.

We know that stress can have a significant impact on both physical and mental wellbeing, and chronic stress can lead to various health issues. To help bring clarity to the topic of stress, our mental health experts have shared some of the most common ways stress can impact the body and tactics to help you better manage the stress in your day-to-day life.





The physical impact of stress



Cardiovascular system

Chronic stress can contribute to high blood pressure, increased heart rate and a higher risk of heart disease.



Musculoskeletal system

Stress can cause muscle tension, and even contribute to conditions like tension headaches and migraines.



Immune system

Prolonged stress may weaken the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to infections and illnesses.



Digestive system

Stress may lead to digestive issues such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), indigestion or exacerbate existing conditions.

The mental impact of stress



Emotional wellbeing

Stress can contribute to mood disorders, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.



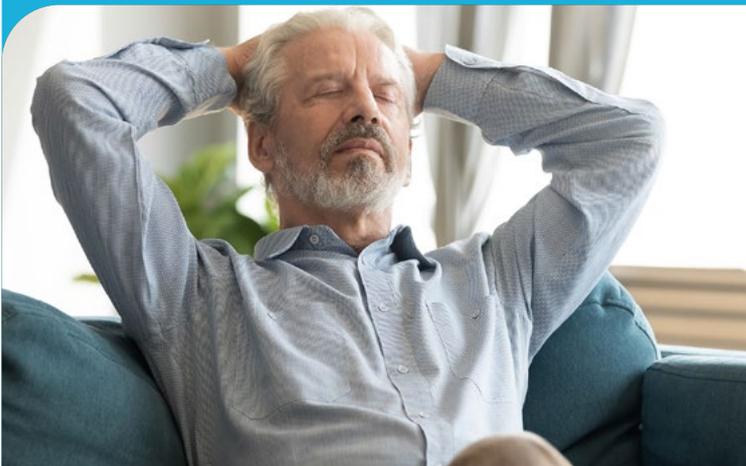
Sleep disturbance

Stress can interfere with the ability to fall asleep or stay asleep, leading to sleep disorders.



Cognitive function

Chronic stress may impair memory, concentration, and decision-making abilities.



Six simply ways to better manage stress

Effective stress management

Regular exercise is known to reduce stress hormones and trigger the release of endorphins, which act as natural mood lifters.

Social support

Maintaining strong social connections and seeking support from friends, family or a therapist can help manage stress.

Seek professional help

If stress becomes overwhelming or persists, seeking professional help from a healthcare provider or mental health professional is advisable.

Relaxation techniques

Practices such as deep breathing, meditation and yoga can help calm the mind and reduce stress.

Time management

Efficiently managing time and setting realistic goals can prevent the feeling of being overwhelmed.

Healthy lifestyle choices

Proper nutrition, sufficient sleep, and avoiding excessive caffeine and alcohol, can contribute to overall well-being and resilience to stress.

Mindfulness and mind-body techniques

Practices like mindfulness, meditation, and progressive muscle relaxation can promote a sense of calm and reduce stress.