



## Stress and the Body

During periods of stress, we activate the fight-or-flight response that causes the body to release adrenaline. Eventually, this decreases our effectiveness.

### Stress response

Stress response	Original purpose	Long-term effect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased heart rate</li> <li>Faster breathing</li> <li>Digestion stops</li> <li>Blood leaves extremities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pump blood faster</li> <li>Provide more oxygen</li> <li>Divert blood to large muscles</li> <li>Divert blood to large muscles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High blood pressure</li> <li>Chest pains</li> <li>Ulcers</li> <li>Cold hands and feet, migraine headaches</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased blood coagulation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimize blood loss in case of injury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chance of blood clotting increases risk of stroke</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extra sugars and insulin are manufactured</li> <li>Stress messages sent to muscles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide more energy</li> <li>Prepare muscles for action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low blood sugar makes you feel tired</li> <li>Fatigue</li> </ul>

### Symptoms of stress

- Absenteeism
- Excessive alcohol use
- Anger problems
- Backaches
- Boredom
- Clenching jaw
- Defensiveness
- Dietary problems
- Distractibility
- Facial tics
- Fatigue
- Feeling trapped
- Fingernail biting
- Grinding teeth
- Headaches
- Hypersomnia
- Increased accidents
- Indigestion
- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Mood swings
- Muscle aches
- Nightmares
- Overeating/undereating
- Pain w/o physical cause
- Sexual dysfunction
- Skin problems
- Social withdrawal
- Upset stomach

## Stress illnesses

- Alcoholism
- Anorexia Nervosa
- Aphthous ulcers
- Arthritis
- Bulimia Nervosa
- Cancer
- Colitis
- Depression
- Dermatitis
- Duodenal/gastric ulcers
- Hypercholesterolemia
- Migraine headaches
- Tension headaches

If you have any about stress or would like to make an appointment,  
contact Aspen EAP at **815.399.9700**