

Stress, Anxiety & Depression



What is Stress?

- **STRESS** is a problem when a person feels that they cannot cope with life pressures.
- As a clinical problem, stress occurs when the demands made on a person exceed (or they feel they exceed) their ability to cope. A variety of factors can contribute to a person feeling 'stressed'. This may include:
 - o Environment (work, home, school etc)
 - o Lifestyle
 - o Emotional issues.

What is Stress?

- An individual person's attitude, personality and approach to life will influence how they respond to stress. The following factors all play a part:
 - How a person thinks about a problem
 - The different ways a person copes with difficult situations
 - Life experiences and life history
 - A person's self-esteem
 - Whether they have people around who can provide support.

Types of Stress

- *Reactive stress*: This occurs when a person perceives that they do not have the capacity to cope with the demands placed upon them.
- *Cumulative stress*: A condition brought about by a number of stressful factors.
- *Critical Incident stress*: A reaction to sudden, unanticipated demands of specific incident/incidents.
- *Post Traumatic stress*: A condition caused by an inability to satisfactorily accommodate memories of a traumatic episode/episodes.

Work Stress

- Cost of work-related compensation claims for stress is \$200million annually in Australia
- What one worker may perceive as stressful, another may see as a challenge. It all depends on:
 - Environment
 - Lifestyle
 - Emotional Issues
 - Life experiences
 - Support level

Work Stress Factors

- The absence of autonomy
 - Feelings of no control over the demands of work
- Poor physical work environment
 - Negative factors involve hot, noisy or cramped conditions
- Workload factors
 - Too little challenge breeds boredom and unrelentingly high workloads may be overwhelming
- Repetitive or meaningless tasks
 - Lack of stimulation also leads to boredom
- Role ambiguity
 - Confusion over the job tasks and demands

Work Stress Factors

- **Work conflict**
 - A major cause of stress at work is unresolved conflict between colleagues or workers and their supervisor
- **Occupational mismatch**
 - There may not be sufficient fit between a worker and their organisation, this may be in terms of communication, rewards/recognition and and/or management style.
- **Taking work home can create conflict with family members**
- **Job satisfaction, security and career prospects may not meet the expectations of some workers**

How to manage Stress

- **Exercise regularly** - regular exercise is a great way to manage stress. You should do some form of exercise that causes you to feel puffed afterwards. A leisurely stroll to the bus stop is not enough! Have at least 20 minutes of exercise three times a week.
- **Avoid conflict** - avoid situations that make you feel stressed as much as you can. Avoid unnecessary arguments and conflict if you find them stressful (although ignoring a problem is not always the best way to reduce stress).
- **Relax** - make sure you give yourself some time to relax each day and try to spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself.

How to manage Stress

- **Eat well** - a nutritious diet is important. Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and avoid sweet and fatty foods.
- **Sleep** - a good sleep routine is essential. Do something calm and relaxing before you go to bed, like listening to music or reading, if you have difficulty falling asleep.
- **Enjoy your life** - it's important to make time to have some fun, use your leisure time for your own enjoyment!

What is Anxiety?

- Anxiety is a feeling people experience when faced with a task that they don't feel comfortable in performing
- Anxiety is a common feeling and everyone experiences this emotional state at some stage in their lives
- When anxiety breeds chronic and disrupting behaviour then this is when the disease is termed a disorder
- Anxiety is the most common mental health problem in Australia, with nearly 10% of the population experiencing it's affects in their daily lives

Anxiety Disorders

- **OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)**
 - People with OCD are compelled to perform behavioural and mental rituals (compulsions)
 - OCD affects 2-3% of the population, up to 450,000 Australians
- **PANIC DISORDER AND AGORAPHOBIA**
 - A panic attack is a brief episode of intense fear; a panic disorder is repeated incidences of a panic attack, triggered by the same situation each time.
 - Agoraphobia is a fear of open spaces, but in terms of a disorder, it is avoiding situation when and where panic has occurred before.

Anxiety Disorders

- **SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER**

- A person with a social anxiety disorder is afraid that they will act in a way that will be humiliating or embarrassing.
- Affects up to 13% of population, who fear being scrutinised by unfamiliar people.

- **SPECIFIC PHOBIAS**

- Between five and 12 per cent of people have phobias. People with specific phobias experience excessive fear and anxiety cued by a specific object or situation.
- E.g. Claustrophobia: fear of confined spaces
- E.g. Aquaphobia: fear of water
- E.g. Acrophobia: fear of heights

Anxiety Disorders

- **SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER**

- A serious psychological reaction that develops in some people following exposure to an overwhelming, frightening or traumatic event, such as military service, a physical assault, car accidents and natural disasters

- **GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD)**

- The main symptom of GAD is excessive persistent anxiety and worry, related to a number of events such as work or study, health, finances or family issues
- For a diagnosis of GAD, the anxiety, worry and physical symptoms must significantly interfere with a person's social, occupational or routine functioning

Dealing with Anxiety

- Treatment is available to anxiety sufferers, the most important of which are:
 - ❖ **EDUCATION**
 - o An important way to control symptoms
 - ❖ **RELAXATION TECHNIQUES**
 - o Being able to reduce muscle tension is important
 - ❖ **COGNITIVE THERAPY**
 - o Focus on changing patterns of thinking and beliefs
 - ❖ **BEHAVIOUR THERAPY**
 - o Deliberate exposure to your fears will help desensitise triggers
 - ❖ **EXERCISE**
 - o 5x a week for 30min will help control symptoms

What is Depression?

- *Depression is characterised by severe or prolonged feelings of sadness, dejection and hopelessness.*
- One in four women and one in six men will suffer from depression at some point in their lives.
- Depression is a complicated illness, which can involve a number of contributing factors - genes, environment, diet, lifestyle, brain chemicals, psychology and personality.

Depression Symptoms

- Feeling sad, hopeless and despairing
- A loss of interest and pleasure in normal activities
- Loss of appetite or weight
- Loss of sex drive
- Sleeping problems, such as an inability to get to sleep or early waking
- Feeling physically tired all the time
- Concentration difficulties
- Feeling guilty and worthless
- Feeling that life isn't worth living

Depression Risk Factors

- A life-changing event, such as the loss of a loved one or the arrival of a new baby
- Chronic illness
- Certain medications, including some high blood pressure drugs
- Alcohol abuse
- A history of child abuse
- Sustained problems at home or at work
- Physical trauma
- Other family members with a prior history of depression
- Chronic stress or anxiety.

Depression States

- **BIPOLAR DISORDER**

- This used to be called manic-depressive disorder. It is where sufferers can swing violently between extreme mood states
- E.g. from elation to despair

- **CYCLOTHYMIC DISORDER**

- Mild mood swings that do not cause enough concern for an individual to seek professional medical help

- **DYSTHYMIC DISORDER**

- Long-term depression that affects a person's quality of life, but not their ability to perform at work, or in a usual family or social situation

Depression States

- **MAJOR DEPRESSION**

- A person suffering from major depression experiences most of the general symptoms listed for depression, and finds that these severely impact on their daily lives.
- Feelings of hopelessness are pervasive, energy levels are low and there is little motivation to do even the simplest of daily tasks.
- Hypersensitivity, paranoia, low self-esteem and suicidal thoughts are all common symptoms of major depression.
- Sufferers with suicidal thoughts should be put into care if their thoughts become tendencies to action

Depression States

- **POSTNATAL DEPRESSION (PND)**

- Around one in eight new mothers experience serious PND
- Symptoms range from mild to severe, due to:
 - o The hormonal upheaval of pregnancy, birth and lactation
 - o Physical exhaustion from broken sleep
 - o Loss of independence
 - o Financial pressures
 - o Altered relationships with partner, family and friends

- **SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER**

- Depression is more common during winter months, usually a person comes out of the 'hibernating' in spring

Depression Treatment

- Medications for treating bipolar disorder, including mood stabilising drugs, such as lithium carbonate.
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or interpersonal relationship therapy.
- Regular exercise and a healthy, balanced diet.
- Stress management techniques.
- Natural therapies

Depression States

- Addressing any contributing problems, such as relationship difficulties.
- Counselling, including psychotherapy.
- In the case of SAD, bright light therapy (BLT) may be used to stimulate the brain to make mood enhancing chemicals.
- Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), in cases of severe, life threatening depression that don't respond to other forms of treatment.
- Hospitalisation, in the case of threatened suicide or suicide attempt.

Getting Help

- If you need any help with stress in your life, there are a number of places to call or websites to visit.

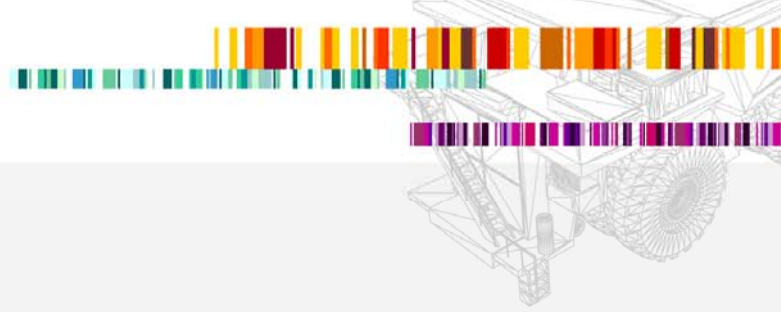
❖ Website Information:

1. BeyondBlue - www.beyondblue.org.au
2. National Mental Health Council – www.mhca.org.au
3. MoodGym – moodgym.anu.edu.au

Depression States

- Phone Assistance:

1. Lifeline (local call cost)	13 11 14
2. Kids Help Line	1800 55 18 00
3. Just Ask Infoline	1300 13 11 14
4. SANE Australia	1800 68 83 82
5. Mensline	1300 78 99 78
6. Mental Health Direct	1800 22 04 00
7. Samaritans Help	1800 19 83 13
8. Psychiatric Emergency Team	1800 67 68 22



Thank You


Any Questions?

