

The Warning Signs of Unhealthy Stress

Your Body

- Breathing problems
- Chest tightness
- Upset stomach e.g. nausea, diarrhoea, constipation
- Tension, aches and pains
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Feeling 'wired' – unable to relax
- Lower immunity, inclined to catch any little bug going around and take longer to recover
- Altered sex drive (reduced) or alternatively, increased need for sex as a release



Your Emotions

- Worrying excessively (similar to anxiety)
- Feeling overwhelmed, stuck or trapped
- 'Short fuse' – sudden bursts of anger and irritability often at small issues
- Tearfulness
- Feeling down
- Loneliness
- Loss of motivation and enjoyment



Check to see if these signs sound like you.

Your Mind

- Thinking feels sped up and thought are intrusive.
- Difficulty making decisions
- Forgetfulness
- Poor concentration
- Poor problem solving
- Easily distracted



Your Actions & Behaviour

- Sleeping problems e.g. can't get to sleep or wake up thinking about farm tasks, or sleeping too much and can't get out of bed
- Poor eating
- May become withdrawn – failing to share daily goals with partner and staff, shutting off from community events and socialisation
- Alcohol, tobacco and caffeine use may increase
- Become reactive rather than proactive
- Avoiding situations or issues e.g. not returning phone calls or opening invoices
- Delaying demanding tasks e.g. dagging sheep



Sarah Donaldson,
Clinical Psychologist