

# Stress – Not a good look



We live in an age where our health and physical appearance are top of mind. We all want to look and feel good and have that reflected in our attitude.

Before you go to work, you probably make an extra effort to ensure that your attire is appropriate for your work and that you are neat and well groomed. However, if you are under high stress, no matter how you dress, it will probably show in your appearance—and it's not a good look.

## **The physical effects of stress**

High stress has many physical and mental effects that you can't disguise. Below are things you should know about the toll of stress on your body.

**Brain** – Stress can trigger problems such as insomnia, headaches, personality changes, irritability, anxiety, depression and even stroke.

**Digestive tract** – Stress can cause diseases in the digestive tract including gastritis, stomach and duodenal ulcers, ulcerative colitis and irritable colon.

**Immune System** – Chronic stress weakens the body's ability to fight infections and viruses, and increases the amount of time it takes the body to recover from illness.

**Heart** – Cardiovascular disease, hypertension and heart attacks are linked to stress.

**Lungs** – High levels of emotional stress can trigger asthma attacks and other asthmatic conditions.



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# The effects of chronic stress



**Mouth** – Mouth ulcers and excessive dryness of the mouth are often symptoms of stress.

**Muscles** – Spasms, pain in the neck and shoulders, lower back pain, and various minor muscular twitches and nervous tics are more noticeable under stress.

**Reproductive organs** – Stress affects the reproductive system and can cause menstrual disorders and infections in women, and impotence in men.

**Skin** – Some individuals react to stress with outbreaks of skin problems such as eczema and psoriasis.

**Hair** – High stress levels can cause excessive hair loss and baldness.

## **Stress symptoms**

Major health problems may be avoided if the signs of stress are identified early. Some of the signs of stress that may become apparent include:

- Loss of appetite or weight gain
- Tiredness, fatigue and weakness
- Chest pains and palpitations
- Difficulty concentrating
- Anger or apathy

Stress is not a good look or feeling. Take the proper precautions, learn your stressors, and manage your stress effectively.