

## When It's More Than Stress

There are times when the stress in our lives is extremely powerful. Personal worries combined with unsettling current events can make you feel overwhelmed. You may find that the stress you or a loved one is experiencing is turning into something more serious. Some related conditions include:

**Anxiety Disorders**—It's natural to feel nervous or anxious when you're stressed. But, people with anxiety disorders worry more intensely. This may cause them to avoid certain situations. And these worries are so frequent that their lives are disrupted. There are several types of anxiety disorders. These include generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and phobias.

**Depression**—Depression is more than just “the blues.” It's marked by prolonged feelings of sadness, despair and hopelessness. Depression may be a response to stressors, such as a loss of a loved one, divorce, or other event. But, people with depression often blame themselves for their sad feelings. They may withdraw from daily activities and social circles. *And, they may even have thoughts of death or suicide, which should never be ignored.*

**Acute Stress Disorder or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**—Many events in life can be stressful. However, some are so traumatic that they trigger a prolonged and exaggerated stress response. Experiencing a natural disaster, crime or abuse, for instance, often leaves a lasting imprint. You may have feelings of anxiety, fear or restlessness. You even may relive the event in your mind—or be unable to shake tragic images.

### Do You Need Help?

Here are some signs that you may benefit from professional help:

- You no longer find pleasure in things that once were enjoyable to you.
- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness take over.
- Relationships with your friends and family begin to suffer or become strained.
- Your work or school performance changes.
- You experience increased irritability, anger and frustration every day.
- You're consumed with worry or panic, or are unable to control repetitive behaviors.
- You abuse alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.
- You have thoughts of suicide or death.

Is the stress in your life overwhelming? Don't hesitate to talk with your doctor or a counselor. There are effective treatments that can help you enjoy life again.

**Remember, Care24 is a great source of information and support. Call with your questions and concerns about stress and many other personal worries. Master's-level counselors are available 24 hours every day.**

**Care24 1-888-887-4114**

TDD/TTY callers, please call the National Relay Center  
at 1-800-855-2880 and ask for 1-888-887-4114.

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