

*“I just can’t relax ...”*

Stress is a part of life. It can be an energizer to get us going or keep us focused on an important task. Stress in relationships can sometimes open us up to new ways of listening to or caring about a loved one. We know stress increases when there is major change such as job loss, the death of a family member or moving to a new community. Usually, we grieve or learn to adapt and the stress diminishes with time.

But chronic stress is potentially dangerous. It can lead to the physical and emotional breakdown of the body. Stress can cause minor health problems such as headaches or ulcers, or major health complications such as heart attack and stroke. It can also have a negative impact on relationships if we neglect, ignore or abuse those closest to us.

Fortunately, we can learn new ways of coping with stress. We can learn to identify warning signals, take better care of ourselves and get support from others when we need it. A counselor can be extremely helpful in working with us to sort things out when stress is overwhelming or creating feelings of depression and loss of control. It’s okay to ask for help ... it’s a sign that we value ourselves and our relationships.



Lutheran Social Service  
*for changing lives*

Call 651.642.5990 or 1.800.582.5260  
for the counseling office nearest you.

*Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota serves all people regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, handicap or age.*

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## Too Much Stress

In our complex world today we are faced with a multitude of choices and an ever-increasing number of expectations of each other and ourselves that can lead to stress.

### Check your response to these warning signals:

- Frequent headaches, stomachaches, colds or muscular aches and pains.
- Difficulty in making big *and* small decisions.
- A general feeling of helplessness or hopelessness.
- Overuse of food, alcohol or tranquilizers.
- Uncontrolled outbursts of anger followed by remorse.
- Feeling too uptight to enjoy life — decreased energy, waking up in the morning feeling tired.
- Feeling overwhelmed.

If you are experiencing any of these signs, you may be suffering from stress. Whether it is stress from your job, a relationship, or just daily living, there are healthier ways to cope with or alleviate stress in your life.

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