

# APRIL IS...

## NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS MONTH



Behavioral Health  
Advocates

STABILIZE & SUPPORT

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WELLNESS SHORTS

#### Stress Awareness Month

has been recognized every April since 1992 to help the public better understand the mind-body-stress connection, increase use of healthy coping skills, and improve our overall well-being.

***Everyone experiences some sort of stress from time to time!***

The American Psychological Association found the most common factors associated with stress are money, work, family, economic outlook, and relationships.



**Stress is a reaction to a situation where a person feels anxious or threatened.**

Common reactions to a stressful situation can include:

- Disbelief, shock, and numbness
- Feeling sad, irritable, moody, frustrated, or helpless
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Headaches, back pains, and stomach problems
- Smoking or the use of alcohol or drugs





# THREE TYPES OF STRESS:



## ACUTE STRESS

Usually brief; most common and frequently experienced; often caused by reactive thinking; negative thoughts predominate situations or events that have recently occurred or are upcoming.

## EPISODIC STRESS

A larger sequence of acute stress; individuals who have chaotic lives, experience multiple crisis situations, or are frequently exposed to stress triggers.



## CHRONIC STRESS

The most harmful type of stress; if left untreated over a long period of time, it can lead to serious physical health issues and deteriorate mental wellness.

## ACUTE SYMPTOMS

**Physical:** asthma, headaches, migraines, back pain, sweating, nausea, indigestion, chest pain, fatigue

**Emotional:** worry, irritability, loss of motivation, anger, difficulty concentrating, mood instability, decreased sex drive, memory problem

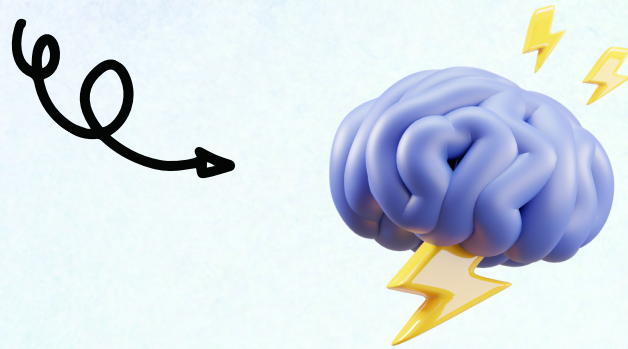
**Behavioral:** nail biting, constant thoughts about stressors, restlessness, teeth grinding, disrupted sleep, diet, and exercise, interpersonal conflict, social withdrawal, substance use, procrastination

## CHRONIC SYMPTOMS

Heart disease, anxiety disorders, skin diseases, depression, memory impairment, substance use, sleep disorders, weakened immune system, poor diet and exercise habits



## STRESS DOESN'T JUST IMPACT OUR MENTAL HEALTH; IT CAN ACTUALLY AFFECT US ON A CELLULAR LEVEL.



When you are placed in a stressful situation, specific stress hormones rush into your bloodstream leading to an increase in heart rate, blood pressure and glucose levels. This is helpful in emergency situations but having this “rush” for extended periods of time can be dangerous.

***Long-term stress can lead to depression or anxiety and can also increase the risk of serious medical conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke.***

**Learning healthy ways to cope and getting the proper care and support can help reduce stressful feelings and symptoms.**



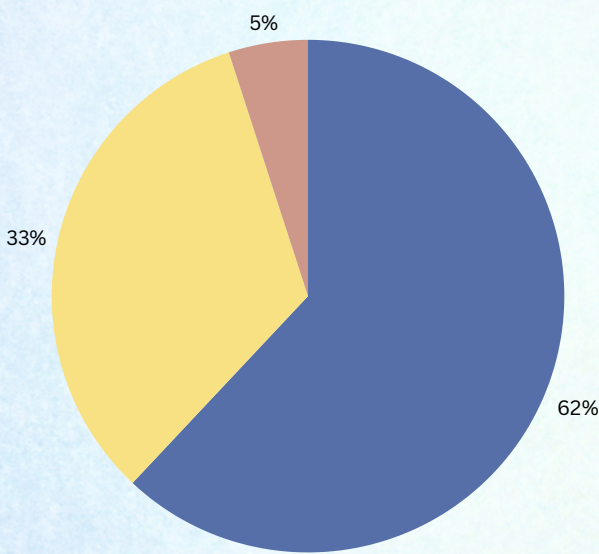




# DID YOU KNOW?

Numerous studies show that **job stress** is far and away the major source of stress for American adults and that it has escalated progressively over the past few decades.

## Stress levels from work:



62%

Have high levels of stress, with extreme fatigue/feeling out of control

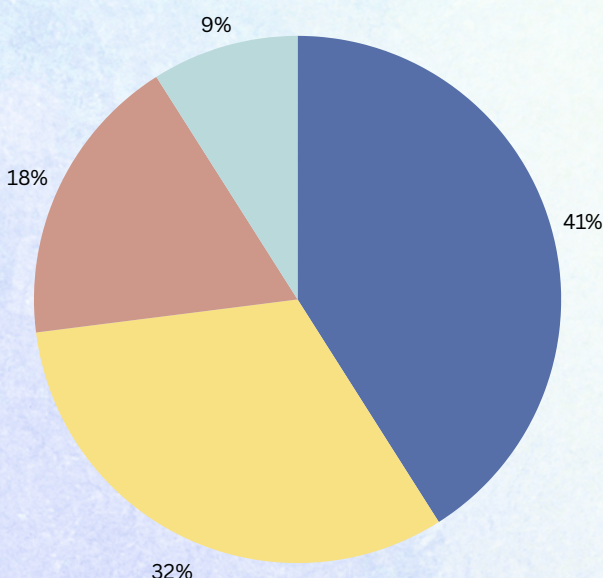
33%

Have constant but manageable stress levels

5%

Have low stress levels

## Causes of workplace stress:



41%

Cite workload

32%

Cite people issues

18%

Cite juggling work and personal life

9%

Cite lack of job security



# QUICK TIPS

The Kim Foundation is a supportive resource and compassionate voice for lives touched by mental illness and suicide.

*They recommend taking time this month to pay attention to different stressors in your life, talk with friends and family about self-care, and practice these strategies to help cope and manage your stress.*



**IDENTIFY  
WHAT IS  
TRIGGERING  
YOUR STRESS**



**EAT A  
HEALTHY DIET**



**PRACTICE  
GRATITUDE**



**TAKE A DIGITAL  
DETOX**



**DECLUTTER  
YOUR SPACE**



**PRACTICE  
BREATHING**



**CHEW GUM**



**EXERCISE**

Check out  
this Stress  
Management  
Guide for  
worksheets!

[www.therapistaid.com/therapy-guide/stress-management-guide/stress/none](http://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-guide/stress-management-guide/stress/none)

Brought to you by your Behavioral Health Advocates from Luzerne, Schuylkill, and Allegheny Counties

## Resources:

[www.therapistaid.com](http://www.therapistaid.com)  
[www.thekimfoundation.org](http://www.thekimfoundation.org)  
[www.stress.org/workplace-stress](http://www.stress.org/workplace-stress)  
[www.chcw.org/april-is-stress-awareness-month/](http://www.chcw.org/april-is-stress-awareness-month/)  
[www.stress.org/april-is-stress-awareness-month-2](http://www.stress.org/april-is-stress-awareness-month-2)

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