

The Stress-Symptom Scale

Rate the frequency with which you've experienced each of the items listed below. Take the last two weeks as your time frame. Use this helpful rating scale:

- 0=Never
- 1=Sometimes
- 2=Often
- 3=Very often

Fatigue or tiredness	_____	Feeling helpless or hopeless	_____
Pounding heart	_____	Excessive drinking	_____
Rapid pulse	_____	Excessive smoking	_____
Increased perspiration	_____	Excessive spending	_____
Rapid breathing	_____	Excessive drug or medication use	_____
Aching neck or shoulders	_____	Feeling upset	_____
Low back pain	_____	Feeling nervous or anxious	_____
Gritting teeth or clenching jaw	_____	Increased irritability	_____
Hives or skin rash	_____	Worrisome thoughts	_____
Headaches	_____	Impatience	_____
Cold hands or feet	_____	Feelings of depression	_____
Tightness in chest	_____	Loss of sexual interest	_____
Nausea	_____	Feeling angry	_____
Diarrhea or constipation	_____	Sleep difficulties	_____
Stomach discomfort	_____	Forgetfulness	_____
Nail biting	_____	Racing or intrusive thoughts	_____
Twitches or tics	_____	Feeling Restless	_____
Difficulty swallowing or dry mouth	_____	Difficulty concentrating	_____
Colds or flu	_____	Periods of crying	_____
Lack of energy	_____	Frequent absences from work	_____
Overeating	_____	Your total Stress-Symptom Score	_____

Your Stress Rating

Your Score	Your Comparative Rating
0-19	Lower than average
20-39	Average
40-49	Moderately higher than average
50 and above	Much higher than average

The Coping With Stress Inventory

Instructions: Listed below are some common ways of coping with stressful events. Check those that are characteristic of your behavior or that you use frequently

- 1. Ignore my own needs and just work harder and faster
- 2. I seek out friends for conversation and support
- 3. I eat more than usual
- 4. I engage in some type of physical exercise.
- 5. I get irritable and take it out on those around me.
- 6. I take a little more time to relax, breathe and unwind.
- 7. I smoke a cigarette or drink a caffeinated beverage.
- 8. I confront the source of stress and work to change it.
- 9. I withdraw emotionally and just go through the motions in my day.
- 10. I change my outlook on the problem and put it in a better perspective.
- 11. I sleep more than I really need to.
- 12. I take some time off and get away from my working life.
- 13. I go out shopping and buy something to make myself feel good.
- 14. I joke with my friends and use humor to take the edge off.
- 15. I drink more alcohol than usual.
- 16. I get involved in a hobby or interest that helps me unwind and enjoy myself.
- 17. I take a medication to help me relax or sleep better.
- 18. I maintain a healthy diet.
- 19. I just ignore the problem and hope it will go away.
- 20. I pray, meditate, or enhance my spiritual life.
- 21. I worry about the problem and am afraid to do something about it.
- 22. I try to focus on the things I can control and accept the things that I can't.
- 23. I use recreational drugs to cope.
- 24. I am part of a community of close friends who mutually care for one another.

Evaluate your results: The even-numbered items tend to be more constructive tactics while the odd-numbered tend to be less constructive tactics.

Adapted from: Davis, Eshelman & McKay, 2000