









# Health and Wellness Tip of the Week - Week 17

April 28, 2014

**Monthly Topic**  
Communicate tips  
to handle stress  
during Stress  
Awareness Month in  
April.

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

Source: American Institute of Stress



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