

## TEST YOUR STRESS AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SIGNS OF STRESS

| Within the past four weeks, how often have you ... |   | RARELY OR NEVER | SOMETIMES | ALWAYS OR OFTEN |
|--|---|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| (tick one box only for each question)              |   |                 |           |                 |
| <b>TENSION</b>                                     | ... had problems relaxing?  |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... felt irritable?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... felt tense?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... felt tired?   |                 |           |                 |
| <b>SLEEP</b>                                       | ... slept badly and restlessly?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had problems falling asleep?  |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... woken up too early without being able to go back to sleep?                  |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... woken several times during the night and found it hard to go back to sleep? |                 |           |                 |
| <b>MOOD</b>  | ... felt unhappy?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... lacked self-confidence?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had a bad conscience or felt guilty?  |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... felt uninterested about the tasks that you do in your daily life?           |                 |           |                 |
| <b>BODY</b>  | ... had a stomach ache?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had a headache?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had heart palpitations?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had muscle tension?   |                 |           |                 |
| <b>THOUGHTS</b>                                    | ... had problems concentrating?   |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had problems thinking clearly?  |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had problems making decisions?  |                 |           |                 |
|  | ... had problems remembering things?  |                 |           |                 |

If you have ticked five or more boxes in the red column, you should consider making an appointment with your doctor. The symptoms of long-term stress differ from person to person, and many of the above-mentioned symptoms are not necessarily caused by stress. Source: Danish Health Authority, leaflet on stress, 2007

If you feel concerned about whether you or a colleague may be suffering from stress, you are advised to speak to your manager, union representative, occupational health and safety representative or a colleague (see page 3).

## MORE INFORMATION

**CONSULTATION ON REFERRAL AND ANONYMOUS COUNSELLING**  
[staff.au.dk/psych-counselling](http://staff.au.dk/psych-counselling)

**READ MORE ABOUT STRESS AT**  
 AU HR  
 Danish Health Authority  
 Danish Knowledge Centre for the Working Environment  
 Danish Working Environment Authority  
 The library

# PREVENTING AND MANAGING STRESS

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Wants to be a good and healthy workplace for all employees

Sees stress as a shared challenge and a joint responsibility

Wants to ensure that everyone actively takes responsibility for promoting well-being and preventing stress in their daily lives

# WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is a physical and psychological reaction to overload. Stress is not always unhealthy. Basically, you can talk about stress as being in the **well-being**, the **risk** and the **danger** zone.



### WELL-BEING ZONE

Even when we are thriving and feeling well, it is natural to experience brief periods of stress. As long as the stress is temporary, it is an appropriate reaction that helps us to overcome strain.



### RISK ZONE

Long periods of stress can trigger a number of physical and psychological symptoms that may have a negative impact on work capacity and health.



### DANGER ZONE

If your stress is not reduced and a balance re-established, stress can have more serious consequences and constitute a genuine threat to both your health and your working capacity.

Even though stress affects the individual, his or her surroundings play an important role. There are factors both in an employee's private life and his or her working life that can either aggravate or help protect against stress.

# A JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

At ST, we are all responsible for **preventing**, **detecting** and **managing** with unhealthy stress.

| Tasks and responsibilities when it comes to ... |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|   | ... promoting well-being and preventing stress in daily life   | ... detecting and reacting to unhealthy stress in daily life  | ... handling reduced working capacity and illness due to long-term stress  |
| EMPLOYEES                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn about stress and their own reactions to stress, and use this knowledge to prevent stress in daily life</li> <li>contribute to creating a culture characterised by a sense of shared responsibility for tasks and well-being</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take symptoms seriously and react to them</li> <li>contact their manager/union representative/occupational health and safety representative if symptoms persist</li> <li>take part in preparing an action plan and help to continuously evaluate the plan</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are willing to work with the situation</li> <li>are willing to accept professional help and support</li> </ul>  |
| COLLEAGUES                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are aware of colleagues' well-being and signs of stress</li> <li>contribute to creating a culture characterised by a sense of shared responsibility for tasks and well-being</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enter into dialogue and express their concerns if they notice a colleague showing signs of stress</li> <li>agree that they will inform their manager/union representative/occupational health and safety representative/HR</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide support and backup, and ask questions instead of remaining silent</li> <li>take responsibility for tasks which must be performed while a colleague is absent due to illness</li> </ul>  |
| MANAGERS  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make sure to have the necessary knowledge about stress and the skills needed to handle it</li> <li>are aware of signs of stress among employees, and signal that they are welcome to come and talk about it</li> <li>prepare guidelines and agreements about stress for their department</li> <li>make a point of asking systematically about well-being and stress, for example at the annual SDD</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enter into dialogue with the employee when concerned</li> <li>take part in preparing an action plan and evaluate it on an ongoing basis</li> <li>analyse triggering factors at the workplace, also with a view to preventing stress among the other employees</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>help initiate treatment for stress</li> <li>ensure a gradual return-to-work plan, and control the complexity of assignments in connection with sick leave</li> <li>focus on communication and prioritising tasks in the department</li> </ul> |