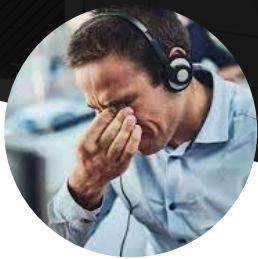


# COMMON SIGNS & SIGNALS OF A STRESS REACTION

Research suggests that police work can have a profound effect on officers, impacting their ability to do their jobs. Officers experiencing occupational stress may report the following symptoms: Physical, Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioral.



## PHYSICAL

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Muscle Tremors
- Chest Pains\*
- Difficulty Breathing\*
- Elevated Blood Pressure
- Headaches
- Thirst
- Visual Difficulties
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Profuse Sweating
- Chills
- Shock Symptoms\*
- Vomiting
- Fainting

\*Indicates a definite need for medical evaluation



## COGNITIVE

- Confusion
- Poor Attention | Poor Decision
- Heightened Alertness
- Lower Alertness
- Poor Concentration
- Poor Memory
- Hypervigilance
- Difficulty Identifying Familiar Objects or People
- Rapid Heart Rate
- Increased Awareness of Surroundings
- Decreased Awareness of Surroundings
- Poor Problem Solving
- Poor Abstract Thinking
- Loss of Time, Place, or Personal Orientation
- Disturbance Thinking Nightmares
- Intrusive Thoughts

Please Contact your Peer Assistance Team, Chaplain, or EAP if symptoms continue more than a couple of days

# COMMON SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF A STRESS REACTION

The impact of police stress can range from mild to severe.

Stress reactions are a normal response to overwhelming stressors

## Emotional

- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Grief
- Denial
- Severe Panic
- Emotional Shock
- Fear
- Uncertainty
- Loss of Emotional Control
- Depression
- Agitation
- Apprehension
- Overwhelmed
- Intense Anger
- Inappropriate Emotional Response

## Behavioral

- Change in Sociability ( Not spending time with friends and family)
- Change in Speech Patterns
- Loss of Appetite
- Increase of Appetite
- Withdrawal
- Emotional Outburst
- Suspiciousness
- Change in Usual Communication Skills
- Pacing
- Heightened Startle Reflex
- Hyper-Alert to Environment
- Increased Alcohol Consumption
- Inability to Rest or Sleep
- Antisocial (purposely avoiding people)
- Non Specific Body Aches
- Erratic Movements
- Change in Sexual Function

## PREVENTATIVE

- Identify your active coping styles by identifying sources of stress and developing a plan to overcome them. Research shows that by doing so creates an effective protective factor.
- Other protective factors include strong social and intimate connections, peer support and counseling, and education.

## POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

Following a traumatic experience, certain individuals may undergo positive transformations. Known as post-traumatic growth, it involves a shift in perspective and cognitive reprocessing. Five aspects of post-traumatic growth include:

- Growth related to new possibilities.
- Ability to relate to others.
- Increased sense of personal strength.
- Greater appreciation for life.
- Spiritual change.