**HEART:** begins to pound, sending blood around body carrying sugar (energy) and hormones (eg. adrenalin)

**SKIN:** pales as blood diverted to vital organs.

**SKIN:** less blood supply can lead to diseases developing.

**HEART:** racing heartbeat and high blood pressure can lead to strokes or heart attacks.

**SECONDARY STRESS RESPONSE**

**ONGOING RESPONSE to UNDEALT WITH STRESS**

**PRIMARY STRESS RESPONSE**

**IMMEDIATE & URGENT RESPONSE to SERIOUS THREAT**

**MUSCLES:** tense in readiness for action.

**SWEAT GLANDS:** start up to cool the underlying and overheated muscles.

**BLOOD:** thickens to help it carry more oxygen, fight infection & stop bleeding

**CHOLESTEROL:** high cholesterol in blood can cause hardening of the arteries.

**BLOOD:** heart works harder due to thickened blood.

**LIVER:** body’s own fats and proteins broken down and released to provide further energy.

 

**LIVER:** glycogen converted to blood sugar to give ‘short distance’ energy.

**LUNGS:** air passage dilates, breathing more intense to provide more oxygen to feed increase blood supply.

**MUSCLES:** ongoing tension leads to aches & pains, even muscle strain.

**LUNGS:** super-oxygenated blood can lead to blackouts and upset heart rhythms.

**BLADDER & RECTUM:** Muscles relax to release any excess load.

**DIGESTION:** shutdown can lead to stomach problems, particularly if you eat on the run. Increase in acidity can contribute to stomach ulcers.

**DIGESTION:** processes shut down as blood diverted elsewhere. Mouth goes dry to avoid adding extra fluids to stomach.

**WARNING SIGNS:**

Below are some of the messages our bodies send to tell us we’re stressed.

**KEY:** Early Warning Signs*, Secondary Stress Signs in italics*

**PHYSICAL**

|  |
| --- |
| * Muscle tension/headaches |
| * Sleep disturbance/tiredness |
| * Increased ‘breakouts’ |
| * Rapid pulse |
| * Nausea |
| * Indigestion |
| * Increased Sweating |
| * Flushing (face feeling hot) |
| * *Prolonged/Frequent headaches* |
| * *Susceptibility to mild illness* |
| * *Dizziness/Faintness* |
| * *Breathlessness/Chest Pain* |
| * *Ongoing Nausea/Stomach ache* |
| * *Ongoing fitful Sleep* |

**BEHAVIOURAL**

|  |
| --- |
| * Appetite changes/compulsive eating |
| * Impatience, Carelessness, Hyperactivity |
| * Poor productivity/Low energy |
| * Avoidance of situations/places |
| * Change in sleeping patterns |
| * *Increased alcohol, cigarette and drug use* |
| * *Increased absenteeism, aggression, irritability* |
| * *Sudden tears* |

**EMOTIONAL**

|  |
| --- |
| * Anxiety/Sadness |
| * Moodiness/Grumpiness |
| * Loss of sense of Humour |
| * Withdrawal/Feeling of isolation |
| * Low self-esteem |
| * Feelings of guilt and shame |
| * *Extreme anger (over-reaction)* |
| * *Loss of libido* |
| * *Overwhelming feelings of panic/anxiety* |

**THOUGHTS/PERCEPTION**

|  |
| --- |
| * Inability to make decisions or muddled thinking |
| * Reduced co-ordination/creativity |
| * Becoming more vague/forgetful |
| * Negative ‘globalization’. Everything seems to go wrong/is bad |
| * Fear of rejection/defensiveness |
| * Rushed decisions |
| * Over-sensitive to criticism |
| * *Poor concentration* |
| * *Negative self-talk/fear of failure* |
| * *Feelings of ‘unfairness’* |
| * *Can’t switch off* |