

# Managing your emotions

A resource to ensure you are looking after yourself, as well as your patients

**A**ccept

**B**alance

**C**ommunication

Oncology can be enormously rewarding but is fraught with many challenges. Although you may not immediately recognise it in yourself, dealing with patients with cancer can be a source of stress for many healthcare professionals. It's therefore important to be aware of the warning signs and how to reduce the impact your professional life may have on you emotionally.

Stress manifests itself in different forms in different people, ranging from psychological symptoms to physical ones. The most common symptoms are:

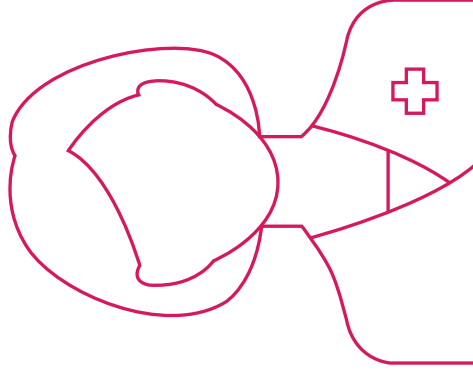
#### **Light Stress:**

- Nail biting/fidgeting
- Sweaty palms
- Feelings of anxiety
- Excessive irritability with others
- Increased anger

#### **Intense stress:**

- Emotional, psychological and physical exhaustion
- Feelings of loss of control
- Depersonalisation

These can lead to **burnout**: severe emotional, psychological and physical exhaustion caused by prolonged stress.



#### **Consider seeing an expert if you start:**

- Feeling permanently tired even after sleep
- Overeating
- Drinking increased levels of alcohol
- Substance abuse

# Top Tips for combatting stress

**Accept** what you can't change.

---

It's completely normal to get upset at the fact that some of your patients will die from advanced breast cancer. However, the best thing for you to do is to accept this and move on so that you can support your patient during this difficult time to the best of your ability.

**Balance** it out.

---

Remember to make sure to take time for yourself. Sometimes, simply a short break to make yourself a cup of tea will help. If it doesn't, going for a walk on your break or hitting the gym to work out your frustrations may help.

**Communicate** your stresses.

---

Talking through your problems not only allows you to work through them mentally, but also share the burden. Talk through your problems with your colleagues or, if your stress is more serious, consider talking to a professional.

## Further information

If you feel like you need to talk to someone or get more information, contact your doctor or a relevant helpline:

### **Mind**

Infoline: 0300 123 3393

Email: [contact@mind.org.uk](mailto:contact@mind.org.uk)

### **Anxiety UK**

Infoline: 08444 775 774

Email: [support@anxietyuk.org.uk](mailto:support@anxietyuk.org.uk)

### **NHS Practitioner Health Programme**

Infoline: 020 3049 4505

Email: [england.phpadmin@nhs.net](mailto:england.phpadmin@nhs.net)