Stress Management.

Stress is a natural reaction to life's challenges and demands. In small doses, stress is beneficial for building resilience, responding to change and for protecting ourselves. However, high levels of stress can be damaging to both our health and our relationships.

In this tipsheet, we will share useful tips on spotting signs of stress and what you can do to manage these symptoms.

Physical Symptoms of Stress:

— Aches and pains

— Changes in bowel movements

— Nausea/ dizziness

— Chest pain/ Increased heart rate

— Frequent colds or flus

Managing the symptoms of stress:

Unplug. In bother our personal and work lives we are constantly connected to technology. Research has shown that disconnecting from our screens for an hour a day leaves us feeling fresh and recharged. If your phone is constantly pinging with notifications, maybe it's time to look at which ones are really essential.

Sleep. Despite the fact that we are aware of the benefits of sleep for both our mind and our body, it can often be the first thing to go when we are stressed. Creating a nighttime routine that allows us to shut off can help us get a peaceful slumber.

Eating and drinking well. First things first, caffeine and alcohol are not our friends when we are dealing with high-stress. Not only do they increase our negative feelings, but they can also contribute to further mental health issues like anxiety and depression. From a nutritional perspective, providing our bodies with well-balanced, nourishing, nutrient-rich foods can provide us with more energy and therefore deal effectively with stress.

Movement. Studies have shown that the inclusion of movement, be it a walk, a run or a fitness class, can drastically eliminate stress through the production of endorphins.

Have fun! Life can be so serious sometimes, and we often feel like we are in a constant cycle of work, sleep, repeat. Take the time out to do something you really enjoy. That could be baking, listening to music, watching a movie, reading, painting, journaling – the list goes on! Taking the time to relax and enjoy your life is a great way to reduce stress. Occupational stress is incredibly common and something that can be hard to address. Many of us are now working from home and so the lack of physical interaction may mean that your colleagues may not be aware of your stress levels.

Continue with your commute. When we were all physically in the office, we were able to check out on the way to and from work. Keep that going whether you are returning to the workplace or working remotely with a quick (or long) walk before and after your sit down to start your day. Not only will you be reaping the rewards of physical movement, but you will also be allowing yourself to unplug.

Set boundaries. Make a conscious effort to not let work spill over into your personal life. Many of us have seen meetings scheduled for earlier or later times than they normally would be, but where possible create a strict schedule with yourself in which you give yourself time to check out of work.

Time management. If the above point seems nearly impossible to you, take a few minutes to sit down and write out your schedule for the day every morning. Creating a "power hour" at the time you know you are most productive is great for ticking off smaller jobs that can decrease your workload.

Stay social! Regardless of whether you are working remotely or not, be sure to include short social elements with your colleagues. 15 minutes to catch up over coffee (either virtually or physically) is a really nice way to connect, and maybe get some help if you need it.