

# YOURHEALTH

Duradiamond Newsletter April 2020



Duradiamond

Building Healthy Business



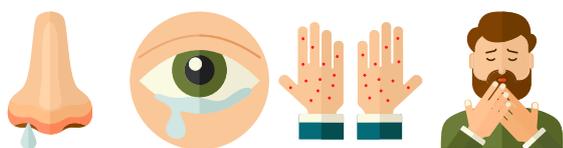
- ALLERGIES:  
DO YOU REALLY HAVE ONE?
- ARE YOU FEELING STRESSED?
- HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK

# Do You Really Have An Allergy?

## What is an allergy?

An allergy is the body's immune system response to normally harmless substances, e.g. pollens, foods and house dust mites. Whilst in most people these substances (allergens) pose no problem, in allergic individuals their immune system identifies them as a threat and produces an inappropriate response.

When a person encounters a particular allergen they are allergic to, a reaction occurs. When the allergen comes into contact with your body's antibodies, these cells respond by releasing histamines and other substances. This normally causes localised swelling, inflammation and itching of the surrounding tissues, which can be irritating and uncomfortable.



## What are the symptoms of an allergy?

Symptoms can be mild or severe in very allergic people and may include:

- Nettle rash/hives
- Itchy eyes, ears, lips, throat and mouth
- Sneezing
- Sinus pain/runny nose
- Sickness, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Stomach cramps or vomiting after an insect sting
- Difficulty in swallowing or speaking
- Vocal changes (hoarse voice)
- Swelling of tongue and/or throat or other areas
- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Dizziness/collapse/loss of consciousness (due to a drop in blood pressure) (floppiness in babies)
- Wheezing/coughing / shortness of breath.

## Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a life threatening severe allergic reaction. It is a medical emergency and requires immediate treatment. Symptoms usually develop suddenly, get worse rapidly and may include:

- Swelling of throat and/or tongue
- Breathing difficulties – such as fast, shallow breathing and a feeling of choking/closing of the throat
- Wheezing
- A fast heartbeat
- Clammy skin
- Confusion and anxiety
- Feeling lightheaded or faint
- Collapsing or losing consciousness.

What to do if someone is having an anaphylactic reaction – read [www.allergyuk.org/information-and-advice/conditions-and-symptoms/33-anaphylaxis-and-severe-allergic-reaction](http://www.allergyuk.org/information-and-advice/conditions-and-symptoms/33-anaphylaxis-and-severe-allergic-reaction)

## Diagnosis and treatment of allergies

Testing for allergies can be complicated and is not always needed.

Medication, including 'over the counter' antihistamines, can work well for many types of allergy but some people may need further treatment.

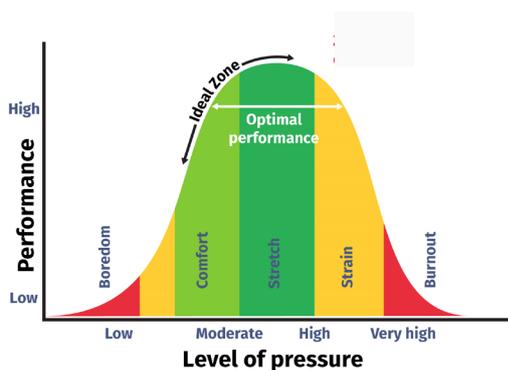
Speak to your GP or occupational health provider if you think you have an allergy.





Stress is a normal part of life and not an illness, but too much stress can make you feel unwell.

Not all stress is bad and many of us thrive on challenge (positive stress)- it is the body's response to changes that create taxing demands.



Signs of feeling over stressed can include changes to how you feel, behave and affect how your body functions day to day.

You may experience feelings of anxiety, fear, sadness or frustration and you may become withdrawn, indecisive or inflexible.

When stressed, people can start to experience physical symptoms such as headaches, nausea and indigestion. To become more resilient:

- Make some lifestyle changes
- Look after your physical health
- Build your support network.
- Give yourself a break

## HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation governing workplace health and safety in Great Britain. As a brief overview, the HASAWA 1974 requires that workplaces provide:

- Adequate training of staff to ensure health and safety procedures are understood and adhered to
- Adequate welfare provisions for staff at work
- A safe working environment that is properly maintained and where operations within it are conducted safely
- Suitable provision of relevant information, instruction and supervision

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

The health, safety and welfare (HSW) regulations apply to all aspects of the working environment and require employers to provide a workplace that is not only safe but also suitable for the duties that are being carried out within it.

This ranges from provisions for the comfort and sanitation of employees to provisions for appropriate working environments and provisions for safety in the workplace,

- ◇ Your H&S department, assisted by your occupational health provider, is there to ensure you are safe and healthy at work.
- ◇ They can provide you with a range of guidance information and assessments to help.
- ◇ Another good source of information is [www.hse.gov.uk/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/)