



## Guidelines to Determine High Stress in Employees During Disasters \*

*NOTE: Any two symptoms in each stage are indicators that a person may be in that stage of stress*

### STAGES OF BURNOUT

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
<b>Physical</b> Periods of high blood pressure Headaches Teeth Grinding Heart palpitations Unusual heart rhythm Insomnia	<b>Physical</b> Persistent tiredness in the morning Increased coffee/tea/cola consumption Nausea Fine motor tremors	<b>Physical</b> Stomach or bowel problems Chronic physical fatigue Chronic headaches Dizziness Profuse sweating
<b>Emotional</b> Irritability Persistent anxiety	<b>Emotional</b> Resentfulness Overidentification with victims	<b>Emotional</b> Sadness or depression Feeling overwhelmed Desire to commit suicide
<b>Cognitive</b> Inability to concentrate Forgetfulness Reduced attention span	<b>Cognitive</b> Decision making difficulties Problem solving difficulties Calculating difficulties	<b>Cognitive</b> Mental fatigue Difficulty communicating thoughts Difficulty remembering instructions Confusion
<b>Behavioral</b> Argumentative Defensiveness	<b>Behavioral</b> Social Withdrawal Procrastination Frequent awkward/clumsy movements Crying easily	<b>Behavioral</b> Desire to "drop out" of society Moving away from friends, family Repeating behaviors even when they are not working Asking nonsensical questions "Deer in the headlights" look

*\*Adapted from Three Stages of Burnout found at <http://www.texmed.org/cme/phn/psb/burnout.asp>  
 Emergency Management in Health Care An All Hazards Approach: Joint Commission Resources*

<b>Supervisor Responses</b>	<b>Be Aware</b>	<b>Watch &amp; Wait</b>	<b>Act &amp; Advocate</b>
	<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Stage 2</b>	<b>Stage 3</b>
	Develop a "Buddy" system so staff can monitor each other	Encourage staff to take breaks if their stamina, coordination or tolerance is diminishing	Allow staff to talk about their emotions to process what they have seen, heard and felt
	Assure that staff are eating and taking fluids regularly	Make work rotations from high stress to lower stress functions and routine assignments	Call on available behavioral health staff to help person process and debrief
Encourage staff to stay in touch with their family regularly	Assure that staff has adequate training & support if they are asked to work on unfamiliar units	Use available counseling assistance programs	
Assure that each unit debriefs at the end of each shift	Assure that each unit debriefs at the end of each shift	Send person home to rest and recover	

*\* Adapted from "Managing Employee Stress & Safety, Maine Employers Mutual Insurance Company & David Lee*

***As you check your employees against these guidelines, note which symptoms are characteristic of the person on a normal day and which are totally out of character for them; weigh your interventions accordingly.***

Employees who exhibit stress symptoms					
Date	Employee Initial	Action Taken		Date	Employee Initial