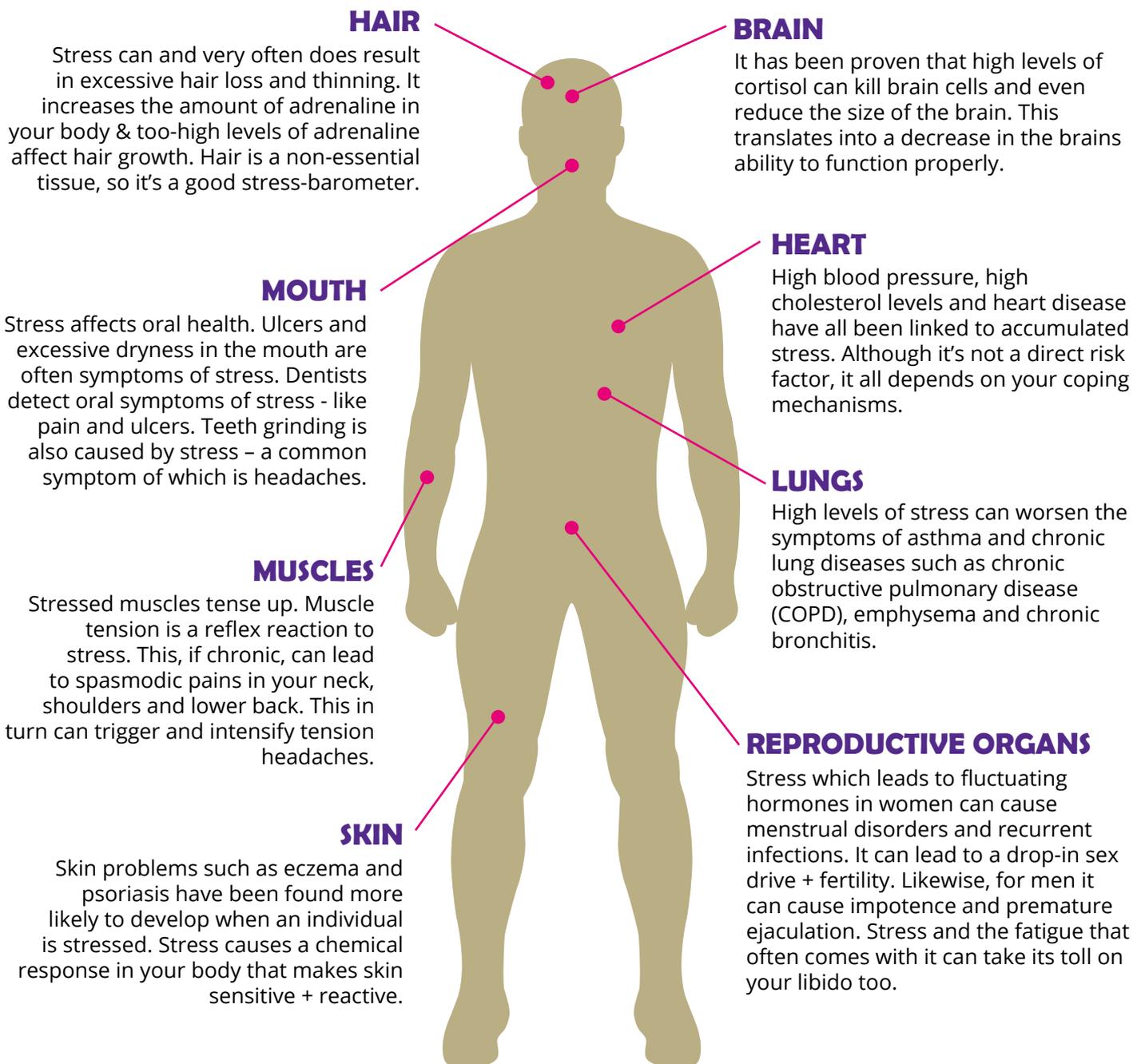


PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF STRESS

Stress not only causes emotional problems but physical problems too. It can affect your body, thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

Being able to recognise symptoms can help you to manage them.



EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF STRESS

**Stress not only causes physical problems but also emotional health problems.
Chronic stress can affect you in many ways.**

We all experience stress from time to time. Despite being unpleasant it is not an illness. Recognising changes in your behaviour and talking about it can help you to protect your mental health.

Insomnia

Stress often causes sleeping problems and also makes existing problems worse. Insomnia is the clinical term for people who have trouble falling asleep, staying asleep or waking feeling refreshed. Stress causes hyperarousal which upsets the balance between sleep & wakefulness.

Irritability

Irritability and anger are common traits in people who are experiencing high levels of ongoing stress. Long-term unresolved anger is linked to physical health problems like high blood pressure and heart disease a double negative if not controlled with the right coping mechanisms.

Anxiety

Though commonly confused, anxiety is not the same as depression. Anxiety is characterised by feelings of overwhelming dread, rather than feelings of low mood and sadness.

It has been discovered that people who experience high levels of work stress are far more likely to suffer from both anxiety and depression.



Depression

Chronic stress leads to heightened immune activity in the body. Many people with depression have increased immune activity. This is often as a result of over activity of our bodies stress response mechanism. A feeling of being unable to cope leads to a state of overwhelm. This becomes a vicious cycle.

Immunity

During the stress response the immune system is activated. Prolonged activation negatively affects how our brain works; our energy levels and our resilience.

Researchers are working to understand how this activation can lead to depression and other types of mental illness but the links are clear.

Mood Swings

Being stressed for prolonged periods can cause mood swings (a rapid change in your mood). It's common to experience changes in your mood but if your behaviour becomes increasingly unpredictable this is a sign of something more serious.