

Signs and Symptoms of Secondary Traumatic Stress

Do you experience any of the following as a result of your work?

- Social withdrawal
- Low energy, fatigue
- Feelings of being easily overwhelmed
- Pessimistic or cynical outlook on life
- Intrusive work-related thoughts or dreams
- Difficulty keeping appropriate relationship boundaries
- Difficulty setting limits, saying “no”
- Depressed mood
- Lack of motivation
- Increased worry and anxiety
- Emotional numbness
- Feelings that no one understands (or would be able to)
- Loss of interest in sexual activity
- Vague physical aches, pain
- Making poor judgments and decisions
- Feelings of loss of control
- Increased sense of danger or not feeling safe
- Finding your mind wandering at work
- Difficulty making decisions
- Sense of disconnection from loved ones
- Increased feelings of suspiciousness
- Feeling “adrift” spiritually
- Accident-proneness
- Involvement in “risky” activities (e.g. drugs, alcohol, sexual behaviors)
- Increased irritability, agitation
- Feeling “on edge” much of the time
- Feelings of despair
- Wanting to escape, “run away from it all”
- Increased “sick days” from work
- Violating ethical standards
- Reduced work productivity, doing the “bare minimum”
- Decrease in respect for others, increase in blaming
- Increase in obsessive thoughts and/or compulsive behaviors
- Decreased interest in “self-care”

(Adapted from Traumatic Stress Institute Self Assessment Tool and other similar sources)