

Physical Health Effects of Psychological Stress

Plenary address- Reducing Risk and Protecting Public Health through Research and Training

Since 1995, ATSDR has followed the progress on scientific research documenting the levels of psychological stress in communities exposed to hazardous substances.

One of the unanswered questions has been--

What is the effect of chronically elevated sub-clinical levels of psychological stress on public health?

Many of the documented health effects of psychological stress on physical health involves diseases of the heart and blood vessels.

Excess stress can trigger flare-ups
of autoimmune disorders.

Elevated stress can lead to disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome and a worsening of some skin disorders.

In addition to contributing to these disorders, psychological stress is a known trigger factor for asthma attacks.

What are the effects on public health from chronically elevated stress levels in communities?