

For many people, a high stress level goes hand in hand with getting ill. Some stress is good for us, but when it is prolonged, stress can be bad for our health. Prolonged stress has a huge impact on our immune systems. This is known through the important work of two psychiatrists: Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe. In the 1960s, they researched the causal link between stress and illness and created the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. It lists life events in order of the stress levels they cause.

Below is their Stress Scale. Check to see how many of these stressors you have experienced in the last year, and see how high your risk is of becoming ill. The more of these stressors you have experienced, the bigger your risk.

We include this with your career transition material because job loss and the job search process often contribute to significant stress. Please be aware of this and take good care of yourself. Find healthy outlets to manage this change and the associated stress. Exercise, nutrition, and positive relationship connections can help you manage stress and stay healthy.

Life Event	Life Change Units
Death of a spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marital separation	65
Imprisonment	63
Death of a close family member	63
Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50
<b>Loss of a job</b>	<b>47</b>
Marital reconciliation	45
Retirement	45
Change in health of family member	44
Pregnancy	40
Sexual difficulties	39
New family member	39
<b>Business changes</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Change in financial status</b>	<b>38</b>
Change in frequency of arguments	35
Large mortgage or loan	32
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
<b>Change in responsibilities at work</b>	<b>29</b>
Child leaving home	29
Trouble with in-laws	29
Outstanding personal achievement	28
Spouse starts or stops work	26

Life Event	Life Change Units
Beginning or ending school	26
Change in living conditions	25
Revision of personal habits	24
<b>Trouble with boss</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Change in working conditions</b>	<b>20</b>
Change in residence	20
Change in schools	20
Change in recreation	19
Change in church activities	19
Change in social activities	18
Minor mortgage or loan	17
<b>Change in sleeping habits</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Change in number of family events</b>	<b>15</b>
Change in eating habits	15
Vacation	13
Christmas	12
Minor violation of law	11

### Score of 300+

At risk of illness within 1 year of event.

### Score of 150–299+

Risk of illness is moderate (reduced by 30% from the above risk).

### Score of 150 and below

Only a slight risk of illness.