

Physical Health & Financial Issues

The Effect of Financial Issues on Physical Health: In addition to our mental health, our physical health can also be adversely impacted by economic insecurity and financial stress. People with higher debt-related stress can be more likely to experience a number of health issues, such as being:

- More than 13 times more likely than low- to no-stress people to lose sleep at night
- More than seven times as likely to have severe anxiety
- Nearly seven times as likely to take stress out on others
- Nearly six times as likely to experience severe depression
- Four times as likely to have ulcers or other digestive problems
- Twice as likely to have heart problems and migraines¹⁰⁶

Chronic financial stress has been linked to frequent headaches and migraines, stomachaches, heart disease, diabetes, insomnia, and more. Constant stress and anxiety put the body in survival mode, not allowing the body to recover, which weakens the ability of our immune systems to fight off infection.

The Effect of Physical Health Issues on Finances: Physical health issues can also lead to financial problems by affecting one's ability to work for periods of time or leading to large medical bills. Being uninsured or not having the savings to pay for routine or emergency medical costs can be extremely stressful. It can also delay much-needed medical care and lead to worse health outcomes and higher costs in the long-run. A key to financial stability is adequate health insurance. Many individuals and families with low incomes qualify for free health insurance, including mental health care, through Medicaid.

Note: Many states offer reduced or no-cost health insurance coverage for lower-income people and their families through Medicaid. Sign up for the Oregon Health Plan if you have not already at: <https://one.oregon.gov/>

Planning ahead: Although you cannot plan for every possibility, creating a plan for potential health problems is a good idea. If you can, start saving up money in a savings account that you set aside specifically for emergencies. If you are able to and your job allows it, keep a good amount of paid time off saved up in case of illness. There are also insurance plans designed to

¹⁰⁶ Original material from Peerlink National Technical Assistance Center.