

YOUNG ATHLETES & STRESS
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Ever build a house of cards? Ever stack flimsy playing cards on top of each other at various angles, tensions, and heights—and expect, yes, *expect* that house to be strong and resilient? Young athletes are built the same way.

Undeveloped values, thinly built belief systems, questioning faith, flimsy confidence—all tilted and stacked on top of parental expectation. And then the house falls in.

Stress affects our bodies and bodily functions. In fact, as much as 90% of your child's sicknesses could be due to stress at home, school, or on the field of play. Stress impacts the immune system and can be the cause of:

Colds
Peptic ulcer
Hyperventilation
Asthma
Rheumatoid arthritis
Allergies
Flu
Skin diseases

All these ailments can worsen, so it is imperative to find the source of your child's anxieties. Until you do, you'll be wasting money on pharmaceutical medicines. You'll

be stacking card upon card hoping something doesn't upset them.

The following symptoms, if constant, are red-flag warnings, telling you your young athlete is under stress and the house of cards is getting ready to fall:

- Headaches
- Swallowing difficulties
- Nausea
- Heartburn
- Cold sweats
- Upset stomach
- Sore neck
- Chronic fatigue
- Dizziness
- Back aches
- Chest pain
- Urinary frequency
- Memory loss
- Muscle spasms
- Panic attacks
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Insomnia

Parents, do those sound familiar? Excessive and/or constant stress can also slow a child's growth and increase chances of sports injuries.

Take the time to investigate the causes of your young athlete's stress. Listen to your child. Watch for the signs. Do your best to make sure your child's house can stand on its own for a long, long time.

[Source material: KidStress, Georgia Witkin, Ph.D, New York Times, "Stress Can Put You Out Of Action," Sally Wadya]