

How to Relieve Stress

Stress is an experience. It produces physical, mental and emotional symptoms. It happens a lot with changes in our lives, both the ups and the downs. It is a way for our body, mind, and spirit to let us know when we are out of balance.

How do I know I am feeling stress?

When you are feeling stressed your body may respond with these physical symptoms:

- Fast breathing or heartbeat
- Dry mouth
- Headaches
- Backaches
- Stomachaches
- Teeth grinding
- Fatigue
- Sweaty palms
- Heartburn
- Foot tapping
- Tight muscles
- Other _____

You may find yourself overeating or having problems sleeping. It is normal to feel depressed or anxious related to stress. The list below describes other feelings you may have during times of stress.

- Lonely
- Tired
- Bored
- Crabby
- Impatient
- Other _____

What can I do to relieve stress?

Have fun.

- See a funny movie
- Go to a comedy club
- Shop until you drop
- Listen to music outdoors
- Go to the library
- Play a game
- Work on a jigsaw puzzle

Get some exercise.

- Roller-blade
- Swim or splash in the water
- Walk
- Run
- Bike
- Bowl
- Ski
- Canoe

Try something new.

- Start a new hobby or craft
- Join a club or group

Express yourself creatively.

- Sing or whistle a song
- Play an instrument
- Draw or paint a picture
- Write a poem
- Journal
- Color
- Try a new recipe or make an old favorite
- Plant flowers
- Garden

Make a gratitude list.

Take care of yourself.

- Take a hot scented bath
- Sip a hot drink
- Nap
- Watch a sunrise or sunset
- Lie back and watch the clouds

Reach out to others.

- Call, write a letter, or email a friend
- Find time to catch up with a family member

Manage your time.

You may feel less stress when you finish something. Some people feel better after cleaning out a closet or a drawer. Make a list and pick the top 5 to do.

Take quiet time.

- Blow bubbles, sit quietly and bring your awareness to your breath. Breathe in to the count of 3, and out to the count of 3.
- Meditate by lighting a candle and watching the flame.
- Go out and be in nature. Take a walk in the woods. Sit next to a stream and daydream.
- Imagine taking your dream vacation.
- Take a drive in the country.
- Listen to your favorite music or relaxation tape.
- Light a candle.