

MANAGING STRESS AND TRACKING MOOD



We should all try to avoid stress in our lives, but it's particularly important when you have insomnia. Stress can contribute to your sleep difficulties, negatively affect your mood, and possibly lead to depression.

Tracking your moods and stress triggers every day is one way to take control and make positive changes to help you get the sleep you need.

You can do this with a journal, mobile app, or text message-based system (such as HealthCentral's Mood 24/7). Or, maybe you're more inclined to blog as a way of reflecting on your physical and emotional states. If you like, you can also share your findings with your doctor.

Tracking your mood and making lifestyle changes based on patterns you find can help you adopt effective stress-reduction strategies.

STRESS RELIEVERS AND MOOD BOOSTERS

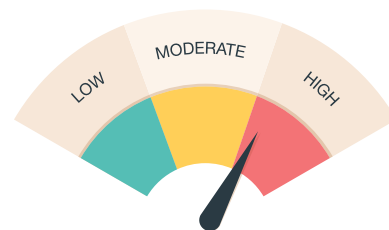
Not all mood-boosting or stress-relief strategies are helpful for everyone. But some of the tips below could help improve your day-to-day quality of life. Give them a try, and record your progress.

- **Express your feelings**, as opposed to suppressing them.
- **Prioritize positivity** in your daily life.
- **Avoid self-blame.**
- **Don't sugarcoat it.** When you're not feeling upbeat, don't pretend to be.
- **Discuss insomnia** when you want to. It's your choice when and where to discuss your condition.
- **Reassert control** over the elements of your life you're able to, such as your outlook.
- **Do, watch, or listen to** something that will make you laugh.
- **Seek out hobbies, activities, or new experiences.** You might:
 - Spend time with a friend.
 - Play with a friend's pet.
 - Go on short walks.
 - Join a book group.
 - Listen to podcasts.
 - Do small art projects.
 - Try acupuncture or massage therapy.
 - Meditate or pray.
 - Try aromatherapy.

Sources: ADAA.org, hopkinsmedicine.org, nhibi.nih.gov, NIH.gov, Sleepfoundation.org

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SLEEP-RELATED ANXIETY



Often, someone with insomnia may associate anxiety and stress with the bedroom. Try the following to minimize these feelings:

- ☐ Avoid certain activities in the bedroom, such as work, talking on the phone, or watching TV. You want this space to be associated with sleep, not other activities.
- ☐ At least an hour prior to bedtime, actively set aside time to "wind down." This can include putting away work, or turning off cell phones, computers, and other devices.
- ☐ By minimizing anxiety and stress associated with sleep, you may fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer.
- ☐ Lack of sleep can contribute to depressive disorders. If you do experience symptoms of depression including, but not limited to, feelings of hopelessness, being overwhelmed, a desire to push others away, or an obsessive fixation on small details, seek help.
- ☐ For support, try speaking to your doctor or seeking out support groups or online insomnia communities.