



Manage Stress in Healthy Ways

CHALLENGE

Make time to relax & reduce stress

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Manage Stress in Healthy Ways.”
2. Create a plan to relax and manage stress in healthy ways.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Clark Griswold gets a disappointing holiday bonus in the cult classic film *National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation*, it’s just the beginning of a stressful holiday season.

There’s a near-death experience with a log truck. A power surge nearly burns down the house. The holiday-dinner turkey is a disaster. A killer squirrel and rabid dog tear the house apart. There’s a sewer line explosion, and more stressed-out extended family moments.

Does that sound anything like the holidays mixed with COVID-19?

If you’re feeling a little stressed out during the holidays, you’re not alone.

But we all know it’s not just the holidays. Life can be stressful.

There’s rush-hour traffic. Your inbox flooded with messages. Tearing through the house looking for your phone...again. Or car problems, financial strain, family matters, parenting, or a serious illness. Stressed out just thinking about it?

Here’s the thing...If you don’t deal with stress in healthy ways it can lead to bigger problems that can impact your health and happiness. And it doesn’t have to be that way. Take the month-long Health Challenge to Manage Stress in Healthy Ways.

What stresses you out?
<http://tinyurl.com/kdt6r2e>

Check Your Stress Meter

How well do you manage stress in your life? Take this quiz to find out.

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1. It’s difficult for me to stay calm when I’m frustrated.
2. I feel angry, distracted, or moody often.
3. I worry a lot about work, money, health, or my relationships.
4. I often feel overwhelmed, lonely, or depressed.
5. I often have headaches, nausea, dizziness, bowel discomfort, or rapid heartbeat.

If you answered **YES** to any of these questions, stress may be a problem. Too much stress can impact your mood and behavior. It can even impair memory and judgment. Stress can even lead to serious health problems. The good news... you can learn to manage stress in healthy ways.

The Downward Spiral of Stress

When you visit the doctor for aches and pains, the common cold, or other health issues, stress may actually be the real issue. Research suggests that stress impacts nearly every system in the body.²

When something crazy happens, hormones (adrenaline and cortisol) flood your circulatory system to help you take action. But when you’re always stressed out, it’s a downward spiral that can lead to:³

- Addictive behaviors
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Certain types of cancer
- Depression
- Difficulty concentrating
- Digestive problems
- Eating disorders
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Sleep disorders, and more

