

12 Healthy Ways to Manage Stress



When you start feeling stressed out, pay attention. A little stress now and then is normal. But if you're always stressed out, that needs to change. Here are some things you can do:

1. Take a breather. Take 10 breaths of fresh outdoor air. Deep breathing has a calming effect that can reduce stressful feelings such as anger, anxiety, and fear. Deep breathing can help lower blood pressure, increase energy, and help you sleep better.⁴



2. Move more, sit less. Just 20 to 30 minutes of daily walking, yoga, or another form of exercise can improve your mood and health. Exercise burns stress hormones. It also stimulates the mind to help you relax and think better to solve problems.⁵

3. Do something you really enjoy. Try reading, painting, cooking, or photography. Or maybe you like fishing, playing music, exercise, or getting a massage. This can take your mind off the stressful things in your life and help you see your situation in a different way.



4. Listen and speak up. Listen to what others say. Then give clear, assertive statements about what you need to accomplish your work or improve your relationship. Be realistic and willing to compromise to solve a problem.

5. Get your Zzzs. Aim to sleep 7 to 8 hours a night. If that's a challenge, take a nap during the day. Sleep helps lower stress and restores the body to a relaxed state.⁶



6. Live within a budget. Overspending, debt, and worrying about money are common sources of stress. Create a budget, and live within your means. Or ask a financial advisor for help.

7. Talk it out with a friend, supervisor, or professional. Sharing your concerns often brings relief, support, and courage to carry on. It can also help you cope better with anxiety, stress, depression, illness, and other crises.⁷



8. Eat healthy foods instead of bingeing on comfort foods. You'll cope with stress better by getting the vitamins and nutrients you need.

Eat more fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains. And drink plenty of water.

9. Delegate or say "no." You can't do everything all at once at work or at home. Learn to say "no" if you need to. Delegate responsibilities. Ask for help. Set priorities and be realistic about what you can handle.



10. Laugh it off. Laugh more. Watch a funny movie. Read a joke book. Or look up funny videos on YouTube. Research shows that laughing reduces stress and releases endorphins that can improve your mood and your health.

11. Chill out. You'll feel better if you don't let things like traffic jams or crying babies bother you. If you get upset easily, practice correcting yourself when something sets you off. If you feel the urge to shout at a careless driver, stop yourself. Replace that thought with something like, "He must be late for an important meeting," or "She must be having a bad day."



12. Ask an expert. A professional counselor can help you deal with financial worries or personal problems. Or you can work with a dietician, fitness coach, spiritual advisor, or life coach. Getting help is a healthy way to reduce stress.

The next time you're feeling stressed out, resist the urge to honk your horn, send an angry email, or eat to calm your nerves. Instead, take a step back. Recognize you're feeling stress. Then use one of these coping strategies to help you reduce stress, feel better, and improve your health.

5 things you should know about stress
<https://tinyurl.com/zzwnhkr>

How to manage COVID stress
<https://tinyurl.com/tcjcj4>

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