



Managing Stress

Managing stress effectively is essential for healthy living. Too much stress can affect blood pressure, weight, emotional wellbeing, sleep, and your risk for heart disease. It's important to learn and practice effective coping strategies to improve our awareness and response to stress.

What can I do to reduce stress?

- Exercise regularly
- Limit alcohol and caffeine
- Don't smoke
- Avoid things that upset you when you can, such as driving in rush-hour traffic
- Try to learn to accept things that you can't change
- Keep your schedule manageable: say "no" when you need to
- When faced with a difficult situation, try to be positive
- Deep breathing: using your abdomen to breathe, exhale slowly, relax your muscles, and inhale slowly
- Progressive relaxation: tense every muscle in your body, starting with your toes. Hold for 10 seconds, and then gradually release the tension
- Shoulder shrugs: raise your shoulders to your ears, hold for 4 seconds, release, and slowly rotate your head in a circle
- Time out: pick something you enjoy and focus on it for 10 seconds, breathing deeply
- Activities such as yoga, tai chi, and meditation can be particularly helpful for stress relief

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