

# Stress Management

---

# What is stress?

---

- Stress is the body's (physiological) response to the feeling of being under abnormal pressure (psychological perception)
- Some stress is necessary because the perception of danger sets off an automatic response known as the “fight-or-flight” response which can help with taking on challenges, but activating this response too often can lead to health problems such as risk of heart attacks and/or strokes.

# What causes stress?

---

While everyone is different and what might cause stress for one person, may not be stressful to another, here are some aspects of life that that might affect your stress level: a transitional period, increased workload, a problem or argument with your family or financial worries. It could be one thing or many. Sometimes it can even be too many things all at once.



# Possible symptoms of stress

---

## Emotional

- Loneliness/isolation.
- Unhappiness.
- Feeling overwhelmed.
- Agitation.
- Irritability, moodiness, or anger.
- Other mental or emotional health problems.

## Physical

- Low energy.
- Headaches and dizziness.
- Upset stomach, indigestion and nausea.
- Muscle tension, aches and pains.
- Chest pain and rapid heartbeat.
- Insomnia.

# How to manage stress

---

- Identify the sources of stress in your life (stressor).
- Be careful not to overlook stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- If stress is hurting you, you can either choose to change the situation or change your reaction. Think of the four As: avoid, alter, adapt, or accept.

# Change the situation

## Avoid unnecessary stress

---



Not all stress can be avoided. If a situation that needs to be addressed, its not healthy to ignore it. However, there are a number or stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

- Learn how to say “no” – Know your limits, don’t take on more than you can handle.
- Avoid hot-button topics – cross them off your conversation list.
- Take control of your environment – If the evening news makes you anxious, turn the TV off. If traffic’s got you tense, take a longer but less-traveled route.
- Pare down your to-do list – Analyze your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks. If you’ve got too much on your plate, distinguish between the “shoulds” and the “musts.” Drop tasks that aren’t truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

# Change the situation

## Alter the situation

---

- Since not all stressful situations can be avoided, try to alter them. Try to figure out what you can do to change things and minimize the possibility of the problem presenting itself in the future. This can involve changing the way you communicate and carry on in your daily life.
- Manage your time better. Plan ahead and make sure you don't overextend yourself, you can alter the amount of stress you're under.
- Be willing to compromise, you'll have a good chance of finding a happy middle ground.
- Be more assertive. Deal with problems head on, do your best to anticipate and prevent them.
- Try Expressing your feelings instead of bottling them up. Communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way. If you don't, resentment can build and its possible the situation will remain the same.

# Change your reaction Adapt to the stressor

## Adjust your attitude

How people think can have an effect on their emotional and physical well-being. Each time you think a negative thought about yourself, your body reacts as if it were in a tension-filled situation. If you see good things about yourself, you are more likely to feel good. Try to eliminate words that lead to self-defeating thoughts such as “always”, “never”, “should”, and “must.”



# Change your reaction Adapt to the stressor

---



- If you can't change the stressor, change yourself. By changing your expectations and attitude you can regain your sense of control and can adapt to stressful situations.

- Adjust your standards. Don't demand perfection from your self.
- Change your perspective of the stressful situation. Ask yourself: Will this matter in a month? A year?
- Reframe problems. Try to view stressful situations from a positive perspective.

# Change your reaction

## Accept the things you can't change

---

- Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.
- Don't try to control the uncontrollable. When there are things in life beyond your control, rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems.
- Look for the upside. As the saying goes, "What doesn't kill us makes us stronger." Try to look at major challenges as opportunities for personal growth and learn from your mistakes.
- Share your feelings. Talk to a trusted friend or a counselor. Talking about what you're going through can be very cathartic, even if there is nothing you can do to alter the stressful situation.
- Learn to forgive. We live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Free yourself from negative energy by forgiving and moving on, let go of anger and resentments.

<https://www.brainline.org/article/stress-management-how-reduce-prevent-and-cope-stress>





## Stress management strategies: Make time for fun and relaxation

- Go for a walk.
- Spend time in nature.
- Call a good friend.
- Sweat out tension with a good workout.
- Write in your journal.
- Take a long bath.
- Light scented candles
- Savor a warm cup of coffee or tea.
- Play with a pet.
- Work in your garden.
- Get a massage.
- Curl up with a good book.
- Listen to music.
- Watch a comedy

# Resources:

---

- <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-articles/stress/none>
- <https://www.brainline.org/article/stress-management-how-reduce-prevent-and-cope-stress>
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/how-manage-and-reduce-stress>
- <https://school-connect.blog/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/EQ-in-your-PJs-Managing-Stress-Student-Handout-Part-1-writable.pdf>