



Take control of stress

High levels of stress can negatively impact a person's physical and mental health. Increased stress can lead to unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, comfort eating, poor diet choices, inactivity, and drinking alcohol.

48% of Americans say they manage their stress with exercise or by walking.¹

There are many inexpensive and quick ways that you can lower your stress level. Here are a few stress busters that can help.

Stress busters

- **Be realistic.** If you feel overwhelmed by some activities, learn to say no. Eliminate an activity that is not absolutely necessary. You may be taking on more responsibility than you can or should handle.
- **Meditate.** Having 10 to 20 minutes of quiet reflection every day may bring you relief from chronic stress as well as increase your ability to handle stress. Use the time to relax the best way you know how.
- **Do one thing at a time.** Make a list to help you feel organized and check things off as they are accomplished.

1. www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/99-101

Many people are not coping effectively with stress and tend to suffer with difficulty sleeping and poor eating habits.

- **Exercise.** Regular exercise is an effective way to relieve stress. Exercising daily for 20 to 30 minutes can help the mind and body.
- **Talk it through.** Talking with friends or family may help you discover that you are not the only one feeling stressed and overwhelmed.
- **Create a support network.** Having a support group of family and friends can help you deal with stressful situations and manage problems in a positive way.
- **Think positive.** If you are optimistic and think that things will work out, more often than not, they will. Thinking positive is a powerful tool.
- **Avoid excess caffeine.** Too much caffeine can lead to feelings of anxiety and agitation. It is also wise to avoid any drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- **Focus on rest.** Sleep is usually the first thing impacted by stress. Be sure to get enough rest. If you struggle with falling asleep, try to take time to unwind and relax.
- **Laugh.** You might not realize that laughing can actually help lower stress. This is one of the most enjoyable options for letting go of tension.
- **Focus on you.** Take time to care for yourself. This is extremely important and often overlooked.
- **Pursue your passions.** Take time to focus on you and find something that you love to do. By focusing on you, it allows you to feel

complete. Feeling complete can have an overall impact on your happiness and stress levels.

- **Stay connected.** Be sure that you take time to keep in touch with good friends and family. Plan a dinner with your spouse or meet some friends out to a movie.

Contact us

Your program provides access to tools and other resources online or call us directly to speak to a professional counselor who is available everyday at any time to provide confidential assistance at no cost to you.

Resources

National Institute of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml

This document is for your information only. It is not meant to give medical advice. It should not be used to replace a visit with a provider. Magellan Health does not endorse other resources that may be mentioned here.