



Stress Awareness

Stress Awareness Month has been held every April, since 1992. During this month, health care professionals and health promotion experts across the country join forces to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic.

Did you know?

Sponsored by The Health Resource Network (HRN), a non-profit health education organization, Stress Awareness Month is a national, cooperative effort to inform people about the dangers of stress, successful coping strategies, and harmful misconceptions about stress that are prevalent in our society.

How Does Stress Affect Health?

Stress that continues without relief can lead to headaches, an upset stomach, high blood pressure, chest pain, problems with sleeping or sex, depression, panic attacks, or other forms of anxiety and worry.

On top of that, if you handle stress with food, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, overspending, or other things that don't solve the problem, you're going to end up with more stress.



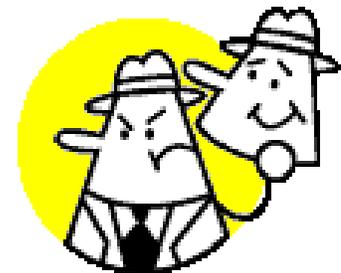
Check our YouTube for Relaxation Videos on:

- Guided Imagery/Meditation
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Deep Breathing Techniques

Change your thoughts to promote Positive Self-talk:

- "I've got this."
- "I can get help if I need it."
- "We can work it out."
- "I won't let this problem get me down."
- "Things could be worse."
- "I'm human, and we all make mistakes."
- "Some day I'll laugh about this."
- "I can deal with this situation."

To help you feel better, practice positive self-talk every day – in the car, at your desk, before you go to bed or whenever you notice negative thoughts.



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When you're feeling stressed try to:

Stop
Think
Refocus
Exercise
Sleep
Smile



What Are the Warning Signs of Stress?

Chronic, ongoing stress can wear down the body's natural defenses, leading to symptoms including:

- General aches and pains
- Grinding teeth, clenched jaw
- Headaches
- Indigestion or acid reflux symptoms
- Muscle tension in neck, face, or shoulders
- Problems sleeping
- Racing heart
- Cold and sweaty palms
- Tiredness, exhaustion
- Trembling or shaking
- Weight gain or loss
- Upset stomach, diarrhea
- Sexual problems
- Being irritable, impatient, or forgetful

Take a break from the stressor. It may seem difficult to get away from a big work project, a crying baby or a growing credit card bill. But when you give yourself permission to step away from it, you let yourself have time to do something else, which can help you have a new perspective or practice techniques to feel less overwhelmed

Exercise. Exercise benefits your mind just as well as your body. We keep hearing about the long-term benefits of a regular exercise routine. But even a 20-minute walk, run, swim or dance session in the midst of a stressful time can give an immediate effect that can last for several hours.

Smile and laugh. Our brains are interconnected with our emotions and facial expressions. When people are stressed, they often show a lot of the stress on their face. Laughs or smiles can help relieve some of that tension and improve the situation.

Get social support. Call a friend, send an email. When you share your concerns or feelings with another person, it does help relieve stress. But it's important that the person whom you talk to is someone whom you trust and whom you feel can understand and validate you.

Meditate. Meditation and mindful prayer help the mind and body to relax and focus. Mindfulness can help people see new perspectives, develop self-compassion and forgiveness. When practicing a form of mindfulness, people can release emotions that may have been causing the body physical stress.

