Tips to reduce stress

It's impossible to avoid stress completely, but developing healthy coping strategies will help you manage—and reduce—the stress in your life.

Confront your stressors
Make a list of the things that cause you to feel stressed and make a plan to deal with each one. Having a plan will help you feel more empowered and less overwhelmed.

Get enough sleep
The amount of sleep you get affects your mood and your ability to tackle problems. Never sacrifice sleep to get everything done.

Learn to say no
Sometimes simply having a lot to do—even things you enjoy and want to do—can cause you stress. Know that it's okay to turn down requests and invitations.

Be grateful
Taking small moments every day to be grateful can reduce stress and improve your overall well-being.

Practice mindfulness
Mindfulness is simply making the effort to notice things that you wouldn't normally pay attention to. Throughout the day, try to be fully present and to focus on the "now."

For some calming techniques, watch this short video.

VIDEO

Reducing stress

Here are some more ways to reduce stress.

If it's out of your control, let it go
If you are stressed over things you can't change, let those worries go completely.

Get active
Moving your body is a very effective stress reliever. Shoot some hoops, do yoga, or just go for a long walk.

Relax/meditate
Close your eyes, imagine a relaxing scene, and breathe deeply. Breathe in, count to four, exhale. Repeat.

Take time for yourself
Do whatever has made you feel calm and relaxed in the past. For example, spend time in nature, play with a pet, or take a hot bath.

Write in a journal
Writing down your thoughts and emotions, including what's causing you stress, can be a good way to work through your feelings.

Get support
Confide in others when you're feeling stressed. It's much healthier to share your concerns than it is to go it alone.

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Managing Stress

Information and tips to help you reduce stress and care for your mental health

Managing Stress

There are many mental health issues that cause people to feel less than their best; however, one of the most common is stress. Relationship issues, school pressures, social media, problems at home—these are just a few of the things causing stress for young people today.

We all experience stress from time to time—it's a normal part of life. However, if you have a lot of stress or don't know how to manage your stress effectively, it can interfere with your day-to-day life.

This pamphlet will explain what stress is and how it can affect your mind and body. It will also provide tips on what you can do to manage the stress in your life before it gets out of control.

Sometimes the most important thing you can do when you're under a lot of stress is to ask for help. Talk to your parent or counselor and let them know what's going on.

What is stress?

Stress is your body's reaction to change, demands, and/or difficult situations. These reactions can be both physical and mental.

Are you stressed?

How do you know if you're experiencing normal levels of stress—or something more serious? Answer the following questions to find out whether you could be dealing with more than just everyday stress.

	Yes	No
▶ Do you often feel overwhelmed?	☐	☐
▶ Do you have a hard time relaxing?	☐	☐
▶ Do you often feel frustrated, nervous, or angry?	☐	☐
▶ Do you get a lot of headaches and/or stomachaches?	☐	☐
▶ Do you often have trouble sleeping?	☐	☐
▶ Do you eat too much or too little?	☐	☐
▶ Do you feel dread or panic when thinking about everything you need to do?	☐	☐

How many did you check "Yes?"_____

Each of the above questions can be an indicator of stress. If you answered "yes" to more than a couple, stress may be a problem for you. Keep reading for more information—and for some ideas on how you can reduce and manage the stress in your life.

How can stress affect you?

Stress can impact all parts of your life, including your physical and mental health, your behavior, and your ability to think clearly.

Here are a few of the symptoms people can experience when dealing with a lot of stress.

Physical symptoms

When stress is becoming overwhelming, your body will give you clues that it's time to address it. These can include:

- ▶ headaches/upset stomach.
- ▶ rapid heartbeat.
- ▶ chest pain and discomfort.
- ▶ more frequent illness.
- ▶ disrupted sleep.
- ▶ cold and clammy hands and feet.

Emotional symptoms

High levels of stress can also cause problems with your mental and emotional health, including:

- ▶ forgetfulness and trouble focusing.
- ▶ difficulty relaxing.
- ▶ feeling like you're losing control.
- ▶ agitation, moodiness, and frustration.
- ▶ an inability to "quiet" your thoughts.
- ▶ worrying.

If you are dealing with symptoms such as the ones listed above, or you'd just like to be better at handling the stress you sometimes have, read on for some simple ways to manage stress and get more enjoyment out of life.