

Stress Management QUICK TIPS

INSTANT STRESS RELIEVERS

Take six deep breaths.
Inhale, hold for five counts and exhale through your mouth.
Visit Hawaii.
...or any other pleasant scene from your past. Visualize the scene in detail by stimulating all your senses.
Hug someone.
Four hugs every day will do a lot to calm you down.
Take an exercise break.
Take a brisk walk at lunch. Climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator. When your mind is cluttered, move your body.
Have a good laugh.
Your spirits will rise immediately.
Find a friend.
Choose a patient soul, one who won't butt in or give advice, to listen to your concerns.
Change your focus.
Put your job concerns away for five minutes.
Finish something.
Give yourself a quick sense of accomplishment.

COMMON CAUSES OF STRESS

- Lack of stimulation or challenge
- Too much demand or stimulation
- Environmental influences--too much noise, excessive heat or cold, air pollution, crowding, etc.
- Death of a family member or friend
- Unsatisfactory personal relationship
- Loss of job or unemployment
- Illness or injury
- Change of any kind (positive or negative)
- Any threatening situation

SOME SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

- Difficulty falling asleep, restlessness
- Perspiring more than usual
- Upset stomach or stomach pain
- Confusion or inability to concentrate
- Depression
- Headaches
- Lack of energy
- Relationship problems
- Weight gain or loss; change in appetite
- Anxiety
- Frustration
- Increased susceptibility to colds and other minor infections

The AAABCs of Stress Management

Stress management is a decision -making process. You can choose to:

Alter it,
Avoid it, or
Accept it by building your resistance or changing your perceptions
All three of these techniques can be effective coping strategies.

ALTER

implies removing the source of stress by changing something (problem solving, direct communication, organizing, planning, and time management).

AVOID

implies removing oneself from the stressful situation or figuring out how not to get there in the first place (saying "no", delegating, letting go, withdrawing, and recognizing your own limitations).

ACCEPT

involves equipping oneself physically and mentally for stress by...

BUILDING

resistance, increasing your tolerance for stress: physically through proper diet, regular exercise, and systematic relaxation; mentally through positive affirmation, taking time for mental health, clarifying goals & values/priorities; socially through support systems, investing in relationships, clear communication, and intimacy; and spiritually through meditation, prayer and worship.

CHANGING

perceptions. Change unrealistic expectations and irrational beliefs (like "I should succeed at everything I try"). Build self esteem and cultivate a positive attitude.

Source: Richard Holland, University of Delaware