



Balance

Manage your stress and take control

Everyone feels stress from time to time. Some stress can even be good. However, severe or long-term stress can have major effects on your overall health. Health research shows a link between stress and mental and physical health, including heart and blood pressure problems.

Here are some other ways stress may impact you:

- Lack of patience
- Inability to concentrate
- Inability to make decisions
- Increased alcohol or tobacco consumption
- Lack of interest in food
- Inability to relax
- Feeling tense and/or nauseated
- Feeling sweaty with a dry mouth
- Heart palpitations
- Headaches
- Muscle tension in the neck and shoulders

Five ways to ease the stress in your life

- 1. Manage your time better.** Make a list of tasks you need to do, set priorities, and forgive yourself when everything isn't perfect.
- 2. Set limits.** Yes, you want to tackle that extra work project. And maybe you made a million promises to run errands for your family. But try to be honest about what you can realistically do.
- 3. Exercise.** We all know how exercise can improve your health. But it can also help you feel better by lowering your stress. Take a walk, run, play golf, swim, dance, or do yoga.
- 4. Ease your fears.** Sometimes the pressure we feel is what we cause ourselves. So ask yourself if a certain situation deserves as much stress as you feel.
- 5. Talk to someone.** Talking to someone you trust can do wonders for lowering stress. It may even help you solve a problem. But talk to your doctor or seek counseling if your stress doesn't go away.

Take steps to manage your stress — and get on the path to a healthier you

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