

Stress Management

Stress is one of the ways our bodies respond to the day-to-day struggles and demands of life. Some symptoms that may include worry, a feeling of being overwhelmed, increased heart rate, headaches, sleep difficulties, procrastination, and more. Contrary to popular belief, not all stress is bad. A little bit of stress can be healthy, it keeps us alert, productive, and increases the odds of overcoming obstacles. It's when stress becomes too intense, or lasts for too long, that it becomes problematic; it can result in serious physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms.

SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

- Headaches
- Back pain
- Sweating
- Nausea
- Indigestion
- Chest pain
- Fatigue
- Nail biting
- Constant thoughts about stressors
- Restlessness
- Teeth grinding
- Disrupted sleep, diet, and exercise
- Interpersonal conflict
- Social withdrawal
- Substance use
- Procrastination
- Worry
- Irritability
- Anger
- Loss of motivation
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mood instability
- Decreased sex drive
- Memory problems

PROLONGED UNMANAGED STRESS CAN LEAD TO

Heart disease • Anxiety disorders • Skin diseases • Depression • Memory impairment • Substance use • Sleep disorders • Weakened immune system • Poor diet and exercise habits

STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS

The negative effects of stress can be reduced with the use of social support, emotional management skills, maintaining a healthy life balance, and attending to basic needs.

- **Use a planner or calendar to manage your time**
- **Write lists & reminders**
- **Focus on what you can control**
- **Plan Ahead**
- **Communicate Needs**
- **Ask for help**
- **Understand your stress triggers**
- **Take breaks when doing tasks**
- **Break your tasks/goals down into bite sized chunks**
- **Delegate tasks & responsibilities**
- **Do a brain dumps (write it out) of all your current stressors**
- **Take care of your basic needs (nutrition, hygiene, sleep)**