

Your mental health matters!



You may get routine medical checkups but looking after your mental and emotional health is equally important for your well-being. Staying mentally healthy affects your work productivity, how you think, feel and act, handle stress, relate to others and make healthy choices. Nourishing your mental health is especially important when you're facing stressful challenges. These tips can help you feel emotionally fit and balanced.

Maintain good relationships. Stay in touch with friends and family, especially those who help you feel positive. Or join a local church or synagogue, or a meetup.com group that shares your interests.

Share your feelings—you are not alone! Talk and walk with a friend outside, whenever possible—being in nature is calming, and connects you to the world in a positive, nurturing way.

Get enough sleep, and move your body! Find out how many hours you need for restful, restorative sleep. During the day, exercise regularly to help stoke the feel-good hormones, while dissipating cortisol, the stress hormone.

Reset with a moment of mindfulness. To corral draining, runaway worries, sit quietly, and slowly breathe in for four counts, hold for four, and slowly exhale for seven. Repeat several times.

Practice optimism. Avoid negative self-talk and seek out daily experiences that bring a smile to your soul!

Stimulate your brain. Consider taking a class in writing, a new language or technology. Or play word games, mahjongg, or chess. Mental activity can help stave off depression and premature death.

Tend to something or someone. Looking after a pet or plants or volunteering to help someone or a cause can be profoundly rewarding.

Take a risk—try something you always wanted to do. Maybe it's singing in a choir, sending a poem you wrote to the local newspaper or exploring an offbeat location. Pushing yourself past your fears will boost your self-esteem!

Pay attention to signs of depression. If you're feeling hopelessness or worthless, overwhelmed, lost interest in activities you enjoyed, sleeping less or more than usual, and that you can't pull out of these feelings, you may be depressed. Seek help. Medication and counseling or both can help you feel good again.

Health Advocate can get you to the right support and resources.



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