

# High Stress Levels



If you are receiving this template it means you scored 31-45 on your mental health test. You are highly stressed and must be feeling worried right now, fear not. You are not alone.

## What to do?



*It is important to note that you must consult with a medical professional before undertaking this diet. Please seek medical counsel to find out if there are any medical interventions needed. If you are feeling overwhelmed please contact the **South African Suicide Crisis Line :0800 567 567***

## Some mindfulness techniques to reduce stress:



## What is mindfulness?

*Mindfulness is a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. Practicing mindfulness involves breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress.*

*Spending too much time planning, problem-solving, daydreaming, or thinking negative or random thoughts can be draining. It can also make you more likely to experience stress, anxiety and symptoms of depression. Practicing mindfulness exercises can help you direct your attention away from this kind of thinking and engage with the world around you.*

## What are the benefits of meditation?

*Meditation has been studied in many clinical trials. The overall evidence supports the effectiveness of meditation for various conditions, including:*

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Pain
- Depression
- Insomnia
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Preliminary research indicates that meditation can also help people with asthma and fibromyalgia.
- Meditation can help you experience thoughts and emotions with greater balance and acceptance. Meditation also has been shown to:
- Improve attention
- Decrease job burnout
- Improve sleep
- Improve diabetes control

## Mindfulness exercises

- *There are many simple ways to practice mindfulness. Some examples include:*
- *Pay attention. It's hard to slow down and notice things in a busy world. Try to take the time to experience your environment with all of your senses — touch, sound, sight, smell and taste. For example, when you eat a favorite food, take the time to smell, taste and truly enjoy it.*
- *Live in the moment. Try to intentionally bring an open, accepting and discerning attention to everything you do. Find joy in simple pleasures.*
- *Accept yourself. Treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend.*
- *Focus on your breathing. When you have negative thoughts, try to sit down, take a deep breath and close your eyes. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body. Sitting and breathing for even just a minute can help.*
- *You can also try more structured mindfulness exercises, such as:*
- *Body scan meditation. Lie on your back with your legs extended and arms at your sides, palms facing up. Focus your attention slowly and deliberately on each part of your body, in order, from toe to head or head to toe. Be aware of any sensations, emotions or thoughts associated with each part of your body.*
- *Sitting meditation. Sit comfortably with your back straight, feet flat on the floor and hands in your lap. Breathing through your nose, focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. If physical sensations or thoughts interrupt your meditation, note the experience and then return your focus to your breath.*
- *Walking meditation. Find a quiet place 10 to 20 feet in length, and begin to walk slowly. Focus on the experience of walking, being aware of the sensations of standing and the subtle movements that keep your balance. When you reach the end of your path, turn and continue walking, maintaining awareness of your sensations.*

## When and how often should I practice mindfulness exercises?

*Simple mindfulness exercises can be practiced anywhere and anytime. Research indicates that engaging your senses outdoors is especially beneficial.*

*For more structured mindfulness exercises, such as body scan meditation or sitting meditation, you'll need to set aside time when you can be in a quiet place without distractions or interruptions. You might choose to practice this type of exercise early in the morning before you begin your daily routine.*

*Aim to practice mindfulness every day for about six months. Over time, you might find that mindfulness becomes effortless. Think of it as a commitment to reconnecting with and nurturing yourself.*

## The DASH Diet :



**We recommend considering the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet.**

### **Key Recommendations for a DASH Diet:**

- **Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins:**
- **Fruits and vegetables:** Incorporate a variety of colorful produce into your meals and snacks.
- **Whole grains:** Choose whole wheat bread, oats, or brown rice for added fiber.
- **Lean proteins:** Opt for skinless chicken, fish, or legumes for protein-rich options.
- **Limit sodium, processed foods, and added sugars:**
- **Reduce your intake of packaged snacks, fast food, and sugary beverages.**
- **Choose fresh, whole foods and prepare homemade meals whenever possible.**
- **Check food labels for sodium content and opt for low-sodium options.**
- **Include low-fat dairy products:**
- **Choose low-fat milk, yogurt, or cheese for calcium and vitamin D.**

## Simple Recipe To Follow:

### Vegetarian Stuffed Cabbage



*Though traditional stuffed cabbage recipes are made with meat, here Savoy cabbage leaves are stuffed with a combination of rice, mushrooms, onions, garlic and herbs for a healthy vegetarian stuffed cabbage recipe. The stuffed cabbage leaves gently bake in a simple tomato sauce. This easy stuffed cabbage recipe can be made ahead of time and baked just before serving.*

#### **Ingredients**

**1 cup water**

**½ cup short-grain brown rice**

**1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil plus 2 tablespoons, divided**

**1 large Savoy cabbage (2-3 pounds)**

**1 pound baby bella mushrooms, finely chopped**

**1 large onion, finely chopped**

**4 cloves garlic, minced**

**½ teaspoon dried rubbed sage**

**½ teaspoon crumbled dried rosemary**

**1/2 teaspoon salt, divided**

**1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper plus 1/8 teaspoon, divided**

½ cup red wine  
 ¼ cup dried currants  
 1/3 cup toasted pine nuts (see Tips), chopped  
 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
 1 small onion, chopped  
 garlic, minced  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
 1 28-ounce can no-salt-added crushed tomatoes (see Tips)  
 ½ cup red wine

### Directions

- *To prepare cabbage & filling: Combine water, rice and 1 teaspoon oil in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain the barest simmer, cover and cook until the water is absorbed and the rice is just tender, 40 to 50 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and set aside.*
- *Meanwhile, half fill a large pot with water and bring to a boil. Line a baking sheet with a clean kitchen towel and place near the stove.*
- *Using a small, sharp knife, remove the core from the bottom of the cabbage. Add the cabbage to the boiling water and cook for 5 minutes. As the leaves soften, use tongs to gently remove 8 large outer leaves. Transfer the leaves to the baking sheet and pat with more towels to thoroughly dry. Set aside.*
- *Drain the remaining cabbage in a colander for a few minutes. Finely chop enough to get about 3 cups. (Save any remaining cabbage for another use.)*
- *Heat 1 1/2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, onion, garlic, sage, rosemary and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper; cook, stirring, until the mushrooms have released their juices and the pan is fairly dry, 8 to 10 minutes. Add wine and cook, stirring, until evaporated, about 3 minutes more. Add the mixture to the cooked rice along with currants and pine nuts.*
- *Heat the remaining 1/2 tablespoon oil in the skillet over medium-high. Add the chopped cabbage, the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper; cook, stirring, until*

*the cabbage is wilted and just beginning to brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Add to the rice mixture.*

- *To prepare sauce: Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, salt and pepper and cook, stirring, until starting to soften, 2 to 4 minutes. Add tomatoes and wine; bring to a simmer and cook until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes.*
- *Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.*
- *To stuff cabbage: Place a reserved cabbage leaf on your work surface; cut out the thick stem in the center, keeping the leaf intact. Place about 3/4 cup filling in the center. Fold both sides over the filling and roll up. Repeat with the remaining 7 leaves and filling.*
- *Spread 1 cup of the tomato sauce in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Place the stuffed cabbage rolls, seam side down, on the sauce. Pour the remaining sauce over the rolls and drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil.*
- *Bake, uncovered, basting twice with the sauce, until hot, about 45 minutes.*

### **Sodium Variation**

*Sodium amounts vary widely among brands of plum and crushed. And although it can be hard to find any labeled "no-salt-added," for the best tomato flavor we use brands that have little or no added sodium. Compare nutrition labels and choose one that has 190 mg sodium or less per 1/2-cup serving.*