Tips for Relieving Stress (and Why You Should Give Them a Try)

[National Stress Awareness Day](https://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/national-day/national-stress-awareness-day-first-wednesday-in-november#:~:text=National%20Stress%20Awareness%20Day%20on,stress%20factors%20in%20your%20life.) is a day dedicated to raising awareness about what stress looks like, the repercussions of long-term stress, and healthy ways to cope with stressful life events.

Stress is something we all deal with. It is just a normal part of life. However, chronic stress can begin to have severe consequences for a person’s physical and mental health. That’s why, this National Stress Awareness Day, we would like to share some tips and tricks for relieving your stress.

## What is Stress?

Stress is a state of worry and tension typically triggered by difficult or nerve-racking situations. It is a natural human response to pressure that we all experience from time to time, especially when we feel uncomfortable or threatened. We originally evolved to feel stress in order to ensure the survival of our species. However, these days, stress can just leave us feeling sick to our stomach and anxious. Some signs of stress include:

* feeling irritable, tense, or wound up
* experiencing feelings of overwhelm
* anxiety, worries, or fear
* dealing with a racing heart and mind
* feeling shaky, achy, or dizziness

## The Consequences of Excessive Stress

Although everybody feels stressed from time to time, the feeling has effects on a person’s mental and physical health that can lead to some serious consequences, including:

* Cardiovascular disease
* Sleep problems
* Weight fluctuations
* Cognitive issues
* Mood swings
* depression or anxiety
* A weakened immune system
* Stomach and/ or digestive issues

## Tips for Stress Relief

Stress is a normal part of life. However, it can have devastating consequences when not dealt with. If you’re feeling stressed, a few steps you can take to feel less overwhelmed include:

### Movement

Moving your body can play a significant role in reducing stress. It releases tension and built up stressed energy while raising endorphins and other happy hormones. There are a ton of ways you can move your body. You just have to find enjoyable forms of movement that get your heart pumping. A few exercises you can give a chance are:

* Walking
* Hiking
* Yoga
* Pilates
* Biking
* Swimming
* Dancing
* Jump roping
* Stair climbing
* Weight lifting

The possibilities are seemingly endless!

### Engaging in Acts of Self-Care

Self-care looks different for all of us. It could involve cuddling up to your pet or cozying up with a good book. Not everybody’s self-care acts are going to look the same. Consider things that leave you feeling better, and carve out some time in your days to enjoy them! A few self-care habits you can give a try if you don’t know where to begin are:

* Reading
* Journaling
* Going for a walk
* Creating a cozy environment
* Practicing a hobby that brings you comfort
* Engaging in yoga or stretching
* Sitting in nature

The better you take care of yourself, the more resilient you will become to stress, the happier you will be, and the more life satisfaction you will experience.

### Healthy Diet

Your diet plays a significant role in your resilience to stress. Studies suggested that those who consume diets full of high sugar and ultra-processed foods are [more susceptible to stress](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8103503/). That stress can then start a vicious cycle of unhealthy eating habits that trigger more and more feelings of worry and anxiety. Make sure that you are eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, beans, protein, nuts, and seeds.

### Leaning on Your Support System

Social support is a science-backed way of building resiliency against stress. Knowing that you have a support system allows you to feel supported in difficult situations, which can certainly help relieve stress. If you are feeling alone or as though you are lacking a support system, there are many support groups available online and in person. You can also seek out friends with similar interests in clubs, sports teams, or volunteer work.

### Learning How to Set Healthy Boundaries

Sometimes, the best way to relieve stress is to cut as many stress-inducing factors in your life as you can. This can be done by setting boundaries and learning how and when to say “no.” When you know how to set healthy boundaries, you can take control of your life. Your time will no longer feel overbooked, your finances no longer have to feel overstretched, and your relationships can feel stronger knowing that you can be fully present in the activities you decide to participate in.

### Cutting Back on Screen Time

Our screens can be a great way to connect with distant loved ones and the world around us. Unfortunately, they can also be significant stress triggers, leaving us with information overload.

If you have been feeling chronically stressed lately, a screentime detox may be just what you need. You can set a day away from all screens, a week without social media, or a month without the news. Consider what kind of break you need from your screens and take it.

### Cuddle

Whether you’re cuddling with a pet or with a loved one, cuddles have been linked to an increased perceived availability of [social support](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4323947/), which can lower stress levels, decrease the effects of stressful life events, and increase a person’s overall quality of life.

### Journaling

Journaling has been suggested to offer great benefits for users, like reducing stress and anxiety. It offers a positive outlet for complicated thoughts and emotions. It can also help you learn more about your thinking patterns, allowing you to catch negative thinking patterns and change them to thoughts that benefit you.

#### Worry Journaling

Some people experiencing a lot of stress find that venting their worries and frustrations can bring a cathartic feeling. That is where worry journaling comes in. List out your worries on a piece of paper. You can then consider which worries you have control over and which ones you don’t. Plan to take care of the worries you have control over and work to dismiss the worries you do not.

### Cutting Back on Caffeine

Caffeine can be a great way of finding energy when feeling fatigued. Unfortunately, it can also be a huge factor in increased stress levels. Caffeine ignites similar physical reactions as stress, like raising heart rate and blood pressure, which can leave you feeling unwell and overwhelmed.

### Practice Relaxation Techniques

Practicing relaxation techniques will allow you to develop tools for coping in stressful situations. A few relaxation techniques that are great for reducing stress are:

* Meditation
* Mindfulness
* Walking
* Breathwork
* Yoga
* Breath or body focus
* Guided imagery
* Progressive muscle relaxation

## We Are Here for You

Sure, stress is a normal part of life that can have a great way of keeping us alive. But there’s no questioning the fact that stress can be, well… stressful. The body’s and mind’s reactions to the emotion can quickly become detrimental to a person’s long-term health, happiness, and overall quality of life. With so many negative consequences, these tips for stress relief will be worth a try.

However, if you feel stress is consuming your life, we are here for you. You deserve to live without constantly feeling on the edge. Through science-backed therapeutic techniques like cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), our mental health professionals will work to teach you effective relaxation techniques, better understand why you are feeling this way, and find the right treatment for you. [Contact](https://www.michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today.

**References**

<https://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/national-day/national-stress-awareness-day-first-wednesday-in-november#:~:text=National%20Stress%20Awareness%20Day%20on,stress%20factors%20in%20your%20life>.

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Keywords: stress, anxiety, mental health, CBT, relaxation techniques