

COMPLIMENTARY GUIDE

- Handling emotions
- Control negative thinking
- Staying calm

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— HOW TO —
REDUCE STRESS



W*elcome to Lancaster Health News.*

Thank you for requesting your complimentary copy from Lancaster Health News of the “*Reduce Your Stress Guide*”.

We appreciate your support and we hope that our health news, special features, and free monthly guides will help to motivate and inspire you.

We realize how hard it is not to feel daily tensions or experience stress and anxiety when faced with health challenges or job changes, coupled with economic stresses and family problems. It may feel so overwhelming at times. But with a plan of action in place, you will begin to feel better immediately.

Our reaction to daily stress and mounting pressure seems to feel insurmountable at times. Life’s little and big stresses are often the primary cause of many health-related problems.

Self-care is tantamount to embracing a journey for better health and wellness. Take a moment to read our guide and check-out the exclusive list of self-care techniques that really work.

One practice that has helped millions of people to overcome stress is our customized step-by-step guide of unique techniques for successful meditation; which is detailed in our upcoming guide; The truth about Meditation. Make sure to sign up for all of our free guides and upcoming newsletters.

The simple techniques in our attached ‘How to Reduce Stress guide’ will lay a foundation for everything you will need to choose an alternative action when faced with a challenge. This will help you alleviate and reduce stress. From getting a better nights sleep to making healthier food choices, practicing yoga, or taking a short walk. Taking action is key.

Even If you begin small you will soon see big results.

Living in a world of daily demands, coupled with work and relationship challenges, including a barrage of negative news broadcasts reinforces the unpredictability and uncertainty of daily life and unwelcome pressures. This can often create additional stress. So let’s agree to unplug for an hour, take a hot bath, and commit to reading this months self-help guide.

In the mornings let’s plan to breathe in some fresh air, take a big stretch, and then fill up a tall glass with fresh lemon water. It is the little things we do each day that will begin to make all the difference.

We wish you much success. Please let us know if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns, and how we can serve you better.

Warmest regards,
The team at LancasterHealthNews.org



Simple Ways to Relieve Stress

Stress and anxiety are common experiences for many people. In fact, millions of adults, teens and children in the United States say they feel stress or anxiety daily.

Many people deal with stress every day. It can be from work, family issues, health concerns, or financial obligations. Sometimes just everyday life can contribute to heightened stress levels.

Why do we stress?

Some factors such as genetics, levels of social support, coping styles, and personality types influence a person's vulnerability to stress. Some people are just more likely to become stressed out than others.

Research shows that parents, people in demanding professions such as healthcare and social work, feel daily stress.

Minimizing the chronic stress of daily life as much as possible is important for overall health. Chronic stress harms health and increases your risk of health conditions such as heart disease, anxiety disorders, and depression.

It's important to understand that stress isn't the same as mental or psychological health disorders which can lead to anxiety and depression.



Best 15 Ways You Can Relieve Stress

1. Get more physical activity

If you're feeling stressed moving your body on a consistent basis may help.

A six-week study found that participating in aerobic exercise 2 days per week significantly reduced overall perceived stress. Plus, an exercise routine significantly improves self-reported depression.

Engaging in physical activity helps reduce stress levels and improves mood, while sedentary behavior may lead to increased stress, poor mood, and sleep disturbances. Regular exercise has been shown to improve symptoms of anxiety and depression.

If you're currently inactive, start with gentle activities such as walking or biking. Choosing an activity that you enjoy. This may help increase your chances of sticking to it.



2. Follow a healthy diet

Your diet affects every aspect of your health, including your emotional and mental health.

In general, people who follow a diet high in ultra-processed foods and added sugar are more likely to experience higher perceived stress levels and feel chronically stressed. This may lead you to overeat and reach for highly palatable foods, which may harm your overall health and mood.

Not eating enough nutrient-dense whole foods may increase your risk of deficiencies in nutrients that are essential for regulating stress and mood, such as magnesium and B vitamins.

Minimizing your intake of highly processed foods and beverages and eating more whole foods

such as vegetables, fruits, beans, fish, nuts, and seeds can help ensure that your body is properly nourished. In turn, this may improve your resilience to stress.

3. Minimize Technology For Better Sleep

Minimize phone use and screen time on your Smartphones, computers, and tablets. Even though these are an unavoidable part of everyday life, our devices are often necessary, however, using them too often may increase stress levels.

Spending too much time in front of screens in general is associated with lower psychological well-being and increased stress levels in both adults and children. Screen time may negatively affect sleep, which is one of the biggest stress factors of all.

4. Consider supplements

Several vitamins and minerals play an important role in your body's stress response and mood regulation. As such, a deficiency in one or more nutrients may affect your mental health and ability to cope with stress.

Plus, some studies show that certain dietary supplements may help reduce stress and improve mood.

For example, when you're chronically stressed, your magnesium levels may become depleted.

Since this mineral plays an important role in your body's stress response, it's important to make sure you're getting enough each day. Supplementing with magnesium has been shown to improve stress in chronically stressed people.

An 8-week study where 264 people with low magnesium was found that taking 300 mg of this mineral daily helped reduce stress levels. Combining this dose of magnesium with vitamin B6 was even more effective.

Other supplements, including rhodiola, ashwagandha, B vitamins, and L-theanine, have been shown to help reduce stress as well. Read all ingredients when adding dietary supplements as they may not be appropriate or safe for everyone.



5. Practice self-care

Setting aside time to practice self-care may help reduce your stress levels. Practical examples of self-care include:

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- ✓ Going for a walk outside
 - ✓ Taking a bath
 - ✓ Lighting candles
 - ✓ Reading a good book
 - ✓ Exercising
 - ✓ Preparing a healthy meal
 - ✓ Stretching before bed
 - ✓ Getting a massage
 - ✓ Practicing a hobby
 - ✓ Using a diffuser with calming scents
 - ✓ Practicing yoga

Studies show that people who engage in self-care report lower levels of stress and improved quality of life, while a lack of self-care is associated with higher risk of stress and burnout.

Taking time for yourself is essential in order to live a healthy life. This is especially important for people who tend to be highly stressed, including nurses, doctors, teachers, and caretakers.

Self-care doesn't have to be elaborate or complicated. It simply means tending to your well-being and happiness.

Exposure to certain scents via candles or essential oils may be especially calming. Here are a few relaxing scents:

Lavender
Rose
Vetiver
Bergamot

Roman Chamomile
Neroli
Frankincense
Sandalwood

Ylang-Ylang
Orange or
Orange Blossom
Geranium



Using scents to boost your mood is called aromatherapy. Several studies suggest that aromatherapy can decrease anxiety and improve sleep.

To summarize: Self-care is an important part of managing stress. A few simple strategies you may want to try are yoga, lighting candles, taking baths, and reading a good book.

6. Reduce your caffeine intake

Caffeine is a chemical found in coffee, tea, chocolate, and energy drinks that stimulates your central nervous system.

Consuming too much may worsen and increase feelings of anxiety. This can make you sensitive and reactive to stress.

Overconsumption of caffeine may harm your sleep, which may increase stress and anxiety symptoms.

People have different thresholds for how much caffeine they can tolerate. If you notice that caffeine makes you jittery or anxious, consider cutting back by replacing coffee or energy drinks with decaffeinated herbal tea or water.

Although many studies show that coffee is healthy in moderation, it's recommended to keep caffeine intake under 400 mg per day, which equals 4–5 cups (0.9–1.2 L) of coffee.



People who are sensitive to caffeine may experience increased anxiety and stress after consuming much less caffeine than this, so it's important to consider your individual tolerance. people's sensitivity to caffeine varies greatly.

7. Spend time with friends and family

Social support from friends and family may help you get through stressful times and cope with stress.



A study that in 163 Latinx young adults in college associated lower levels of support from friends, family, and romantic partners with loneliness, depressive symptoms, and perceived stress

Having a social support system is important for your overall mental health. If you're feeling alone and don't have friends or family to depend on, social support groups may help. Consider joining a club or sports team or volunteering for a cause that's important to you.

Remember, having strong social ties may help you get through stressful times and is important for overall mental well-being.

8. Create boundaries and learn to say no

Not all stressors are within your control, but some are. Putting too much on your plate may increase your stress load and limit the amount of time you can spend on self-care.

Taking control over your personal life may help reduce stress and protect your mental health.

One way to do this may be to say "no" more often. This is especially true if you find yourself taking on more than you can handle, because juggling



too many responsibilities may leave you feeling overwhelmed.

Being selective about what you take on — and saying “no” to things that will unnecessarily add to your current load — can reduce your stress levels.

Plus, creating boundaries — especially with people who add to your stress levels — is a healthy way to protect your well-being. This can be as simple as asking a friend or family member not to stop by unannounced or canceling standing plans with a friend who tends to create drama.

Remember, It's important to create healthy boundaries in your life by declining to take on more than you can handle. Saying “no” is one way to control your stressors.

9. Learn to avoid procrastination

Another way to take control of your stress is to stay on top of your priorities and avoid procrastinating.

Procrastination may harm your productivity and leave you scrambling to catch up. This can cause stress, which negatively affects your health and sleep quality.

Procrastination studies show increased stress levels. These studies also associated procrastination and delayed stress reactions with more negative parenting styles, including punishment and rejection.

If you find yourself procrastinating regularly, it may be helpful to get in the habit of making a to-do list organized by priority. Give yourself realistic deadlines and work your way down the list.

Work on the things that need to get done today and give yourself chunks of uninterrupted time. Switching between tasks or multitasking can be stressful in itself.

Remember, If you find yourself regularly procrastinating, staying on top of your to-do list may help ward off related stress.



10. Take a yoga class

Yoga has become a popular method of stress relief and exercise among all age groups.

While yoga styles differ, most share a common goal — to join your body and mind by increasing body and breath awareness.

Several studies show that yoga helps reduce stress and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Plus, it can promote psychological well-being.

The benefits seem to be related to the effect on your nervous system and your stress responses.

Yoga may help lower cortisol levels, blood pressure, and heart rate while increasing levels of gamma aminobutyric acid, a neurotransmitter that's low in people with mood disorders. Yoga is widely used for stress reduction. It may also help lower stress hormone levels and blood pressure.

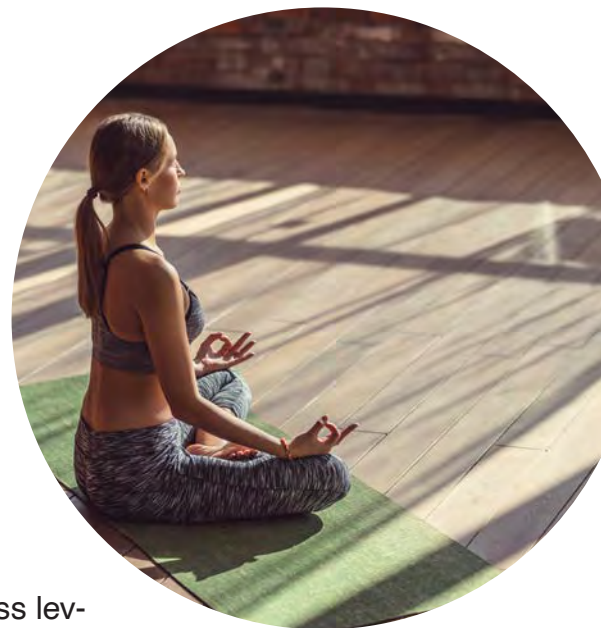
11. Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness describes practices that anchor you to the present moment.

Stress reduction techniques that utilize mindfulness include meditation and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, a special type of cognitive behavioral therapy.

Meditating on a consistent basis, even for short periods, will help boost your mood and decrease symptoms of stress and anxiety.

Mindfulness practices such as meditation may help reduce stress levels and improve mood.



12. Cuddle Time

Human touch may have a calming effect and help you better cope with stress

For example, studies show that positive physical contact may help relieve stress and loneliness

These types of contact may help release oxytocin and lower cortisol. In turn, these effects help

lower blood pressure and heart rate. Both high blood pressure and increased heart rate are physical symptoms of stress.

Interestingly, humans aren't the only animals that cuddle for stress relief. Chimpanzees also cuddle friends that are stressed.

Positive touch from cuddling and hugging may help lower stress by releasing oxytocin and lowering blood pressure.

13. Spend time in nature

Spending more time outside may help reduce stress.

Studies show that spending time in green spaces such as parks and forests and being immersed in nature are healthy ways to manage stress.

A review of 14 studies found that spending as little as 10 minutes in a natural setting may help improve psychological and physiological markers of mental well-being, including perceived stress and happiness, in college-aged people.

Hiking and camping are great options, but some folks don't have access to these activities. Even if you live in an urban area, you can seek out green spaces such as local parks, arboretums, and botanical gardens.

Make it a habit to spend more time outside, whether at your local park or atop a mountain — it may help reduce levels of stress and boost your mood.

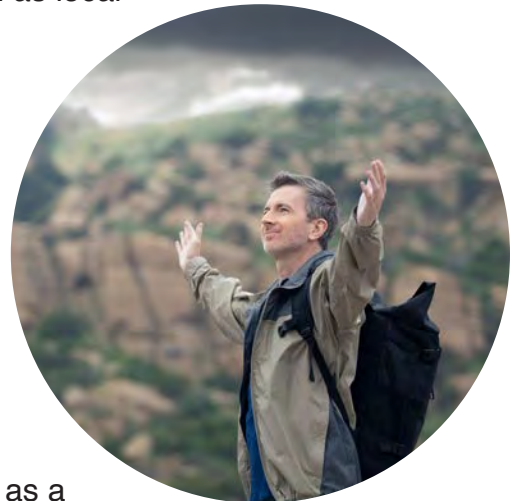
14. Practice deep breathing

Mental stress activates your sympathetic nervous system, sending your body into fight-or-flight mode.

During this reaction, stress hormones trigger physical symptoms such as a faster heart rate quicker breathing, and constricted blood vessels.

Deep breathing exercises may help activate your parasympathetic nervous system, which controls the relaxation response. Deep breathing exercises include diaphragmatic breathing, abdominal breathing, belly breathing, and paced respiration.

The goal of deep breathing is to focus your awareness on your breath, making it slower and



deeper. When you breathe in deeply through your nose, your lungs fully expand and your belly rises. This helps slow your heart rate, allowing you to feel at peace.

When you are practicing deep breathing it activates your body's relaxation response, thereby counteracting some of the physical sensations of stress.

15. Spend time with your pet

Having a pet may help reduce stress and improve your mood.

When you cuddle or touch your pet, your body releases oxytocin — a hormone that's linked to positive mood. Plus, studies show that pet owners, especially those who have dogs tend to have greater life satisfaction, better self-esteem, reduced levels of loneliness and anxiety, and more positive moods.

Having a pet may also help relieve stress by giving you purpose, keeping you active, and providing companionship.

Spending time with your family pets is a relaxing, and an enjoyable way to reduce stress. Although stress is an unavoidable part of life, being chronically stressed takes a toll on your physical and mental health.

Fortunately, these evidence-based strategies can help you reduce stress and improve your overall psychological well-being.

Exercise, mindfulness, spending time with a pet, minimizing screen time, and getting outside more often are all effective methods.



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