

MORE WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS

Start by identifying what causes your stress and acknowledging your feelings. Naming the emotion can help you process it. Then, find stress relievers that work for you.

Take a few deep breaths. Mindful, deep breathing can trigger your body's relaxation response — and you can do it anywhere.

Try it right now:

- Take a slow, deep breath in through your nose
- Keep breathing in until your belly puffs out
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth
- Repeat until you've calmed down

Life can be stressful. But you can control how you manage your stress.

Move More

Physical activity can lower your stress right away. When you're feeling anxious, **follow these tips:**

- Take a simple walk or roll around the block.
- Try relaxing activities like yoga or tai chi.
- Relieve stress with intense activities like kickboxing.
- Walk or bike in a park or on a nature trail to help reduce stress.

Sleep your stress away

Stress can disrupt sleep, but good sleep is essential for managing stress. Most adults need 7+ hours per night.

Try these tips:

Nicotine from cigarettes can make it harder to sleep. So if you smoke, that's just 1 more reason to quit!

- Build a routine: Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily.
- Create a relaxing bedroom: Remove electronics, and ensure it's dark and quiet.
- Unwind before bed: Dim lights, listen to relaxing music, and avoid caffeine, alcohol, and large meals close to bedtime.

Take screen and news breaks

It can be hard to stop scrolling through the news, and a lot of the news lately is... well, a lot. But constant screen time can be a source of stress — so try to look away from the headlines.

Use these tips:

- Do screen-free family mealtimes
- Avoid looking at your phone for an hour after you wake up
- Choose 2 specific times a day when you'll check the news — otherwise, skip it

Connect with other people

Spending time with friends and family can be a huge stress reliever. And feeling connected to others can help you feel calmer.

Try these tips to stay connected:

- Take a few minutes out of your day to call, text, or video chat with someone you love
- Meet up with a friend for coffee or a walk after work
- Volunteer with a local organization — giving back is a great way to be more social

Find a new hobby or relaxation practice

Meditation and breathing exercises can both help relieve stress. You can also relax with a hobby or creative outlet.

Try these tips:

- Follow along with a meditation book, video, or podcast
- Practice deep breathing while listening to relaxing music
- Do soothing activities, like gardening or knitting
- Try something creative, like painting or journaling

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC)

