

Stress Reduction



Benefits of Stress Reduction

◆ Lowers your risk of serious health problems such as:

- ◆ Heart Disease
- ◆ High Blood Pressure
- ◆ Depression



Recognizing Stress

Symptoms

- ◆ Worried
- ◆ Irritable
- ◆ Depressed
- ◆ Unable to focus

Physical Signs

- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Back pain
- ◆ Problems sleeping
- ◆ Upset stomach
- ◆ Weight gain or loss
- ◆ Tense muscles
- ◆ Frequent or more serious colds

Causes of Stress

Common short term causes

- ◆ Too much to do and not much time
- ◆ Lots of little problems in the same day (like a traffic jam or running late)
- ◆ Getting lost
- ◆ Having an argument

Common long term causes

- ◆ Divorce or problems in a marriage
- ◆ Death of a loved one
- ◆ Illness
- ◆ Caring for someone who is sick
- ◆ Problems at work
- ◆ Money problems

Benefits of Stress Reduction

- ◆ Sleep better
- ◆ Control your weight
- ◆ Be in a better mood
- ◆ Get sick less often and heal faster
- ◆ Lessen neck and back pain
- ◆ Get along better with family and friends



9 tips to lessen stress

1. Plan your time.

- 💧 Think ahead about how you are going to use your time.
- 💧 Write a to-do list and decide which tasks are the most important.
- 💧 Be realistic about how long each thing will take.

9 tips to lessen stress

2. Prepare Yourself

- ◆ Prepare ahead of time for stressful events.
- ◆ Imagine what the room will look like and what you will say.
- ◆ Have a back-up plan.
- ◆ Stay positive.

9 tips to lessen stress

3. Relax with deep breathing.



Shallow breathing only fills the top part of the lungs.



Deep breathing fills the lungs fully!

More air = more oxygen = improved health and energy.

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4. Relax your muscles.

- Stress causes tension in your muscles.
- Try stretching or taking a hot shower to help you relax.

DESK STRETCHES

These are stretches to do at your desk.
This program will take 2 1/2 - 3 min.

- Breathe easily
- No bouncing or forcing
- No pain!
- Feel the stretch
- Relax
- See Stretching Instructions, pp. 77-84

1
3 sec., 3 times
p. 82



2
3 sec., 3 times
p. 82



3
2 sec., 2 times
p. 81



4
3 sec., 2 times
p. 84



5
3 sec.
p. 84



6
2 sec.
each side
p. 84



7
3 sec.
p. 84



8
10 sec.
each arm
p. 81



9
10 sec.
p. 82



10
10 sec.
p. 81



11
3 sec.
each side
p. 82



12
10 sec.
p. 79



- Prolonged sitting at a desk or computer terminal can cause muscular tension and pain.
- Taking a few minutes to do a series of stretches can make your whole body feel better.
- Learn to stretch spontaneously throughout the day whenever you feel tense.
- Don't just do seated stretches, but do some standing stretches too. Good for circulation.

From the book:

34 **Getting in Shape** © 1994 Golden Publications, Inc.

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Photocopy this page and keep it in your tool drawer.

9 tips to lessen stress

5. Get Active

- ◆ Physical activity can help prevent and manage stress.
- ◆ It can also help relax your muscles and improve your mood.

9 tips to lessen stress

6. Eat Healthy

- ◆ Give your body plenty of energy by eating vegetables, fruits, and protein.
- ◆ Avoid sugary drinks and foods



9 tips to lessen stress

7. Drink Alcohol in Moderation

- ◆ Don't use alcohol and drugs to manage your stress.
- ◆ If you choose to drink, drink only in moderation.
- ◆ This means no more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 drinks a day for men.

9 tips to lessen stress

8. Talk to friends and family.

- ◆ Tell your friends and family if you are feeling stressed.
- ◆ They may be able to help.

9 tips to lessen stress

9. Get help if you need it.

- ◆ Stress is a normal part of life. But if your stress doesn't go away or keeps getting worse, you may need help.
- ◆ Over time, stress can lead to serious problems like depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or anxiety.
- ◆ If you are feeling anxious or hopeless, talk to a doctor.
- ◆ Lots of people need help dealing with stress – it's nothing to be ashamed of!