

Tips for Managing Stress

Stress is a part of life. But when stress continues to rise it can be hard to handle. While we can't completely avoid stressful times, these strategies can help us cope and care for ourselves.

Know your stress signals

Everyone experiences stress differently. You may feel angry, irritable, tired, sad, or checked out. Some people have trouble concentrating or making decisions; others try to “push through” to feel productive. Either way, it's important to notice when stress is building up and taking control. That way, you can put yourself back in the driver's seat.

Take care of your body

Chronic stress is hard on the body. Try focusing on your most simple, basic needs: food, movement, and sleep. When stress feels big, it's OK to start small. Taking a walk, remembering to eat breakfast, and going to bed 15 minutes earlier than usual are great ways to get started.

Find your balance

You don't have to make the best, healthiest choice all the time. Stress isn't comfortable—it's tempting to reach for a short-term escape in things like alcohol, isolation, or zoning out on your phone. Avoidance is normal, but that relief is only temporary. Notice when you're relying on it too much, but don't beat yourself up or set unrealistic expectations. That pressure will only add to your stress. Instead, be kind to yourself and try to find more balance in the ways that you're coping.

Take breaks

When work is piling up, you might feel pressure to push through. But everyone needs a break—take yours! Go for a walk, chat with a co-worker, listen to a song you like, or close your eyes and breathe for a minute. The work will still be there when you get back.

Ask for help

Lean on the people you trust, and ask for what you need—from your friends, family, co-workers, and your manager. We all need help from time to time. People are often eager to lend a helping hand, but they need to know how. If there's something specific you need at work or at home to make things easier it's OK to ask.