



## Stress Management

Stress is a natural response of the body that appears before situations, events or pressures of daily life that are perceived as threatening or dangerous. Learning to manage stress is essential to be able to face the situations of daily life that alter the quality of life and mental health.

Have you ever experienced having your shoulders hunched up to your ears, clenching your teeth, or feeling tense when someone approaches? Or maybe right now he's thinking about some event in his life that he doesn't know what to expect, like a job interview or a final exam, and he notices that his breathing is rapid, and his heart slows. it's accelerated

When this happens, you are probably going through a stressful time. Your body will be activated to face those events that it considers difficult by sending hormones that will prepare you to be able to cope with the demands or survive if your life is in danger. This is called the fight/flight/freeze or hold response. When any of these responses are activated, the body will focus on sending the necessary energy to achieve a rapid, adequate response and be able to cope with the stressful event.

### What causes stress?

Many situations can cause stress, including any of the following:

- Loss of a loved one or a job.
- Life events, such as having a baby, buying a house, getting divorced, having financial difficulties, or living in an unsafe place.
- Witnessing surprising events, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, pandemics, having an accident, being the victim of an assault, robbery, or crime.
- Medical conditions, such as acute, chronic illness or a new diagnosis.

Feeling a little stress can help you meet a deadline, a goal, and even survive a time of danger. However, being under extreme conditions of stress (chronic stress)

can alter your emotions, your sense of well-being and that of your loved ones, people at work and in your community.

### The signs and symptoms of stress are different from one person to another

- **Emotional:** crying, feeling restless, nervous, easily upset, tense, angry, impatient, or overwhelmed.
- **Physical:** headaches, tiredness, trouble sleeping, weight loss or gain, heartburn, increased blood pressure, irregular menstrual period, hair loss, skin changes.
- **Mental:** tension, difficulty thinking clearly or making decisions, memory loss, forgetfulness, and constant worry.
- **Social:** isolation from others, decreased desire for sexual intimacy, feeling bitter, resentful, or impatient with others.
- **Behavioral:** excesses in the consumption of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, food, social networks, video games, sex or assuming risky behaviors.
- **Labor:** not fulfilling assigned tasks, being absent or late, having conflicts with colleagues, uncertainty about the future at work.



### Some recommendations to manage stress:

- Identify what situations or circumstances are causing you stress.
- Acknowledge what you have no control over and do the best you can with the resources you have available.
- Set realistic goals. Make a priority list of tasks, focusing on one at a time.
- Keep a regular time to rest.
- Set aside at least 15-20 minutes a day for physical activity such as stretching, walking, dancing, swimming, or any other exercise. Before starting a routine, check with your doctor.



- Learn a relaxation technique, such as yoga, pilates, meditation, or listening to music.
- Take a few deep, mindful breaths. Feel how the air goes in and out through your nose or mouth. Place your hands where you are feeling the movement of your breath. Repeat this until you feel more calm or focused.
- Spend time outdoors, connect with spaces in nature and do activities that you enjoy and distract you.
- Eat healthy foods and cut down on those that are stimulants like caffeine.
- Be careful how much time you spend watching, reading, or listening to the news and social media.
- If you find that you are using too much alcohol, cigarettes, or other drugs (including prescription drugs) as a means of coping with stress, ask for help.
- Share regularly with loved ones and your support network.
- Schedule a time that allows you to get your work done and continue with your other activities.

- Talk to someone you trust about the things that are bothering you.
- Try to stop yourself when you have negative, angry, or discouraging thoughts.
- If you are undergoing treatment for a mental health condition, continue your treatment and watch for any new or worsening symptoms.

### Contact your doctor if:

- You have trouble controlling your anger or dealing with your stress.
- Your symptoms have caused problems in your relationships.
- You feel depressed, have started, or increased your use of alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, or medication, or have considered harming yourself or others.

### Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with emotional and physical concerns, please visit your primary care, or contact the following phone lines:

#### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

#### APS Health

787-641-9133

#### PAS line

1-800-981-0023

### References:

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003211.htm>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/sites/default/files/health/publications/espanol/estoy-tan-estresado/estoy-tan-estresado-hoja-informativa.pdf>

<https://health.gov/espanol/myhealthfinder/problemas-salud/salud-corazon/controla-estres>

Prepared by licensed Health Educators.

Revised October 2022.

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