

# ACCS



## 12 Ways To Beat Stress

### 1) Focus on the positive.

Sometimes you have no control over the sources of stress in your life. But you can control the way you react. Instead of worrying about things you cannot change, be optimistic about possible outcomes. For example, let's assume you've been given a rush project at work. Instead of dwelling on the time crunch, think of it as an opportunity to show your boss how well you work under pressure.

### 2) Talk it out.

Talking with a trusted friend can help you sort out your feelings and get a new perspective.

### 3) Make a "to-do" list.

It can help you manage your time wisely.

- Write down everything you want to get done in a given day.
- Prioritize your list by importance and/or due date.
- Start with the most important activity (or the one you have to get done soonest) and move down your list.

### 4) Make time for yourself every day.

Don't think of free time as what's left over after you've done everything else. Set aside time each day to read, take a bath, work on a hobby or do something else you enjoy. Making time for things you like can help you "recharge your batteries." You'll feel more prepared to take on new challenges, too.

### 5) Try deep breathing.

This is one of the easiest ways to relieve tension. Slowly breathe in through your nose, feeling your stomach rise. Exhale slowly through your mouth, emptying your lungs completely and feel your stomach fall. Repeat several times until you feel calm and relaxed.

## 6) Try progressive muscle relaxation.

This technique can help relieve tension in your muscles.

- Sit in a comfortable chair, or lie down
- Start with your arms. Make fists with your hands for 5-10 seconds. Then relax all your muscles.
- Work other arm muscles by bending at the wrist or elbows for 5-10 seconds. Then relax.
- Now move on to other muscle groups, shoulders, face, chest, legs, until you've tensed and relaxed your whole body.

## 7) Get enough sleep.

Don't get into a habit of giving up sleep to get more done. It can lead to more stress in the long run. Most adults need about 7-8 hours of sleep every night.

## 8) Take regular breaks.

Taking a break from what you're doing every once in a while can help you come back feeling refreshed and relaxed.

## 9) Get regular exercise.

Finding time to exercise when you're already busy may seem like one more source of stress. But regular activity can actually help: reduce tension, improve your mood and give more energy to get through the day.

In general: Get at least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous, physical activity each week. Try to spread out your activity over the week, getting at least 10 minutes at a time. In addition, do muscle strengthening exercises on 2 days each week. Consult your health care provider before starting an exercise program.

## 10) Laugh!

Laughing can brighten your mood and relieve physical tension. Try reading a comic strip or watching a funny TV show. Look for the humor in everyday situations.

## 11) Eat a healthy diet.

Give your body the energy it needs to cope with stress. Eat a variety of foods that are rich in vitamins, minerals and fiber. Limit fats, cholesterol, salt, caffeine and added sugars in beverages.

## 12) Ask for help when you need it.

Let others share in tasks and chores. And if stress gets out of hand, don't be afraid to ask for professional help.