



Reducing Stress

The following Tips for Dealing with Stress are designed to help you maintain a healthier lifestyle and, in so doing, help you cope with the stress of everyday life on campus.

MAINTENANCE TIPS FOR THE BODY:

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- 1 Build your daily schedule to include a minimum of 20 minutes of aerobic exercise (*Walking to class from your dorm room or parking a little further out will accomplish this without any further thought!*).
 - 2 Eat well-balanced meals, more whole grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables. Substitute fruits for dessert.
 - 3 Avoid or limit caffeine. Caffeine may aggravate anxiety, insomnia, nervousness and trembling.
 - 4 Reduce refined sugar. Excess sugars cause frequent changes in blood glucose levels, adding stress to the physiological functions of your body.
 - 5 Reduce your use of alcohol and drugs. These substances may increase your headaches, swelling of the extremities, decrease your body's coping mechanisms, and add to depression.
 - 6 Get between 6 & 8 hours of sleep nightly. Sleeping through the weekend to make up for lost sleep will not restore your body's balance as will adequate, regular sleep each day.
 - 7 Include at least one relaxation technique (imagery, daydream, prayer, yoga, or meditation) into your daily schedule.

MAINTENANCE TIPS FOR THE MIND:

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- 1 Keep your living space and consequently your mind organized. Think about what happens to your stress level when you're late to class and can't find that book, paper, etc. that you have to take with you.
 - 2 Go to class. Skipping class, while feeling good at the moment, tends to cause stress later when you are trying to catch-up.
 - 3 Do your homework on a regular basis (the rule of thumb is 2 hours of study per 1 hour in class). This will not only improve your ability to learn and retain information, but it will also alleviate the high stress levels before a test caused by trying to make-up for inadequate study throughout the semester.
 - 4 Get involved with campus activities.
 - 5 Maintain communication with family and friends.
 - 6 Form new healthy relationships.

- 7 Talk to someone about your problems (family member, friend, college counselor).
- 8 Get to know your professors (*This is a good way to better understand their point of view and expectations of you as a student!*).

IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION TIPS:

While these may seem mundane, these simple acts can actually alleviate your stress in the short run. Once that's under control then you can work on identifying and alleviating the source of your stress for the long term.

- 1 Take a warm shower or bath (*bubbles do wonders for the mind and body*).
- 2 Go for a walk. Physical exercise is a great way to get your mind off your worries.
- 3 Get in touch! Hug someone, hold hands, or pet a friendly animal. Physical contact is a great way to relieve stress.
- 4 Find a quiet, comfortable space, relax and read a good book (*no textbooks allowed*).
- 5 Clean out your closet.
- 6 Sit down and write a list of 15 things that are good about your life. They can even be the simple things you enjoy doing (petting your cat, going to the movies, cooking, etc.)
- 7 Go for a jog. Ditto # 2.
- 8 Eat something you enjoy.
- 9 Watch TV for an hour – but only an hour!
- 10 Breathe! Some people unconsciously hold their breath when they're stressed. Take five minutes, close your eyes, and focus on the sound of your breath.



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