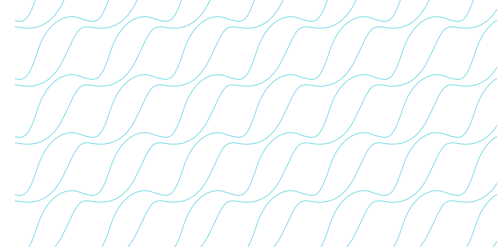


# Stay Calm: How to Manage Stress and Anxiety



*Stress can manifest itself in a multitude of different physical or emotional changes in a person.*

## **Physical signs of stress include:**

- » Headaches, migraines, or feeling lightheaded
- » Stomachaches, ulcers, back and muscle pain, grinding teeth
- » Fatigue, trouble sleeping, difficulty concentrating
- » Poor appetite, weight gain or loss
- » Rashes, itching, and hives

## **Emotional signs of stress include:**

- » Forgetfulness
- » Mood swings
- » Excessive nervousness, anxiety, and worry
- » Increased anger and hostility
- » Depression
- » Difficulty communicating, feeling overwhelmed
- » Withdrawal from social interaction
- » Increase in drinking, smoking or drug use (lowering your immune system)

## **Ways to Manage or Eliminate Stress**

**Plan your day.** Pick something to do, such as work in the yard, read a book, complete a task or goal. Start a hobby or learn a trade you always wanted to such as cooking, writing or painting.

**Eat well and stay active.** A healthy, well-balanced diet and exercise can keep your body fit and able to fight disease. Exercise also is an excellent way to lift up your mood.

**Get some sunlight.** Sit on your porch instead of the couch. Taking a walk or bike ride while maintaining social distancing accomplishes both.

**Limit media exposure.** Put your phone down and avoid binge-watching television shows.

**Maintain your sleep pattern.** Keep a regular schedule for going to sleep and waking up each day.

**Stay in the present.** You can calm both your mind and your body by keeping your mind in the present. The present is hardly ever as stressful as an imagined future or a past full of regrets.

**Meditate to stay in the present.** Center your attention on your breathing, a sound or visual pattern, a repetitive movement, or meditation.

**Review your coping responses.** Think about the successes you've had while experiencing other stressful life events. Recall some of the things you did to cope.

**Acts of kindness.** Find a way to focus on helping others. It can lift their spirits and yours.

## **Outpatient Behavioral Health Services**

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