

# Stress Management Strategies

HEALTH & WELLNESS



## What is stress and why do I care?

Stress is human. We all face different levels of stress, both positive and negative. For example, positive stress can be what happens when you stand in front of a crowd to give a successful presentation. Negative stress can occur when your biological response to stress interferes with your mental, emotional, and physical health and you do not have the right response to manage it. Not being able to cope and manage stress can lead to issues with your grades, your relationships, and your energy levels, and your goals as a student.

## How do I manage it?

Use the following evidence-based tools that can help you combat the negative effects of stress in healthy ways:

- **Eliminate the stressors you can.** Evaluate whether you can change the situation causing the stress, or drop some responsibilities where you can, and even relaxing your standards.
- **Cultivate social support.** A strong social support can improve resilience to stress. Some friends and family can be good listeners and can empathize with you. Giving support to others can also increase positive emotions.
- **Seek good nutrition.** Stress can affect the digestive tract, appetite, other physiological changes including weight gain. Therefore, ensuring you include fruits, vegetables, and high nutrient foods in your diet will help your energy and health.
- **Relax your muscles.** Being stressed out can create tension headaches, backaches, and general fatigue. Try stretching, massages, warm baths, and using progressive and passive muscle relaxation. See the video link below for guidance.
- **Meditate in your free time.** Mindful [meditation](#) can reduce psychological stress and anxiety. Set aside at least five minutes in a quiet place to sit and breath to focus on the present. See the video link below for guidance.
- **Protect your sleep.** Stress can affect your sleep. Set a time you should be going to bed, with time before to wind down before lights out. Avoid caffeine and alcohol in the late afternoon and evening and put down your screens.
- **Get physical.** Brisk movement or moderate physical activity can improve sleep and combat stress. A brisk 30-minute walk or a dance session in the living room can do the trick to cancel out some negative effects of stress.
- **Take a moment in nature.** Studies have found that green space improves mood, including videos of nature. Take a moment to notice nature, whether in a bustling city park, or the trees around your work and school space.
- **Keep your pleasurable activities.** When stress and responsibilities take over, cutting off pleasure can be counterproductive. Look for opportunities to do something for yourself like reading a novel, watching TV, or a fun hobby.
- **Reframe your thinking.** Stop and put your mind elsewhere if you feel you are spiraling into worst-case scenarios. Set realistic expectations for yourself. Understand what is out of your control. See the video link below for extra guidance.
- **Seek help.** Understand that you are not alone and there are resources around you for assistance such as your school advisors, friends, and family. Seeking a psychologist or mental health provider can help you to manage your stress too.

## Video Resources

Reframe Your Thinking:  
[https://youtu.be/3VIL1L\\_ypMg](https://youtu.be/3VIL1L_ypMg)

Relax Your Muscles:  
<https://youtu.be/ClqPtWzozXs>

Meditation:  
<https://youtu.be/lx73CLI0Mo0>