

Stress and Anxiety Busters

Ways to Stay Calm in Challenging Times

tasteforlife

EXPERT
INSIGHTS

Let's face it: Life can be stressful. Work, family, world events, the changing of the seasons—even in the best of situations, they can take a toll, emotionally and physically. If you're suffering from the effects of mild stress or anxiety, take heart. There are effective strategies for coping with the stress of day-to-day life.

Small changes, big impact

Start with self-care. **Exercise** is one of the best things you can do to relieve stress, and it works best when you do it on a regular basis. Find something physical that you like to do, and start a routine. **Eat healthfully:** Avoid meal-skipping and junk-food snacks. Reach for nutritious energy-boosters when you're flagging. **Relax** by practicing yoga or mindful meditation, taking deep breaths, listening to music, or getting a massage.

Organize your tasks to help avoid procrastination and stay on top of what needs to be done. Make prioritized to-do lists. Do one thing at a time rather than multitasking. Learn how to say no. **Keep things in perspective** by challenging your negative thoughts. You may be able to free yourself from a cycle of anxiety by letting go of things that are not in your control.

Sleep is key

In times of stress, it's critical to get a good night's sleep every night. Exercise, relaxation, and supplements like melatonin can help. You

can also try aromatherapy—calming scents include lavender, geranium, rose, sandalwood, and bergamot—and reducing caffeine.

Other tips for enhancing sleep include skipping long daytime naps, sticking to regular sleeping and waking times every day, keeping your bedroom dark and quiet, and avoiding exercise within a few hours of bedtime.

Supplemental support

Nutritional deficiencies can contribute to the symptoms of stress and anxiety. If you're not getting the following in your diet, consider supplements.

Vitamin A: The antioxidant properties of vitamin A can help keep symptoms of stress under control.

B-complex vitamins: The Bs keep your nervous system healthy.

Vitamin C: Another antioxidant, C can guard against oxidative damage—which can pump up anxiety—to your nervous system.

Vitamin D: Your body uses vitamin D to help absorb other vitamins, so if you're D-deficient,

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you may be deficient in other vitamins as well—which can aggravate stress.

Vitamin E: A stressed-out body uses up vitamin E quickly, so supplementing can bring things back into balance.

Magnesium: The mineral magnesium is critical to health; a deficiency can bring on symptoms of stress.

Omega 3s: Research indicates that omega 3s can help with stress. In one study of medical students, those who supplemented with omega-3 essential fatty acids saw their anxiety symptoms go down by 20 percent. Omega 3s also reduce the body's inflammatory response, which can help with pain.

For more support

Consider reishi mushrooms; they contribute to a calm, centered feeling of physical and emotional well-being.

CBD may also be useful. After evaluating results from 76 studies, a team of scientists deemed CBD to show promising results in the treatment of anxiety and stress. 📖📖📖

SELECTED SOURCES "5 things you should know about stress," National Institute of Mental Health, www.nimh.nih.gov • "10 ways to relieve stress & more," Cleveland Clinic, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org> • "Coping strategies," Anxiety and Depression Association of America, <https://adaa.org> • "Get active for mental wellbeing," National Health Service UK, www.nhs.uk • "Manage stress," US Department of Health and Human Services, <https://healthfinder.gov>, 8/20/19 • "Nutrition and stress," <https://campushealth.unc.edu> • "Relaxation techniques to reduce stress" by Jeannette Moninger, www.WebMD.com • "Six relaxation techniques to reduce stress," Harvard Health Publishing, www.health.harvard.edu

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