

Health Enews

April is Stress Awareness Month

April is National Stress Awareness Month and the time to take a look at how to reduce stress in our everyday lives.

Facts About Stress

- Women experience stress at higher levels than men.
- 33% of Americans live with extreme stress.
- 77% of Americans state stress negatively impacts their physical health.
- 48% of Americans state that stress has a negative impact on their personal life.
- 3 out of 4 doctor visits are for stress related ailments.
- Stress related ailments cost \$300 billion each year in medical bills and lost productivity.
- Stress has been linked to heart disease, diabetes, asthma, obesity, gastrointestinal problems, depression, and accelerated aging.
- 4 primary causes of stress include: future of the nation, major illness or injury, financial issues, work-related problems, and death of a loved one.



What Are The Signs of Stress?

Physical changes: physical signs of stress can include headaches, sickness, and weight loss/gain. While these physical signs can be indicative of something else, it is worth discussing with your physician.

Mental changes: seek help if you find yourself becoming irritable, inflexible, short tempered or snapping at people as these can be signs of increased stress.

Emotional changes: stress can wreak havoc on your emotional state and you can start feeling anxious, fearful, frustrated, angry, or sad for no apparent reason.

Behavioral changes: Out of control emotions can lead to unusual behavior such as becoming overly reliant on substances such as caffeine, alcohol, or other drugs. Changes in your appetite and sleep patterns can also indicate a problem.

Ways to Reduce Stress

- Take a break from social media—at least for a few days.
- Watch a funny movie. Laughing can reduce stress, relieve tension, and improve your mood.

- Drink green tea—it contains an amino acid that can reduce stress.
- Rekindle an old hobby.
- Start a gratitude journal to remind yourself of the positives in your life.
- Listen to music while commuting or working. The right playlist can boost mood and increase your energy.
- Talk a walk during your lunch break.
- Unclutter your desk and home.
- Get more Omega-3's from sources like salmon and avocado's—they can reduce stress and anxiety.
- Spend more time with happy, positive people.
- Start a garden to slow down and connect with nature.
- Chew gum. It can reduce stress, fatigue and depression and promote a more positive mood.
- Stop procrastinating—it will just make you more stressed later.
- Eat some antioxidant rich dark chocolate to lower stress hormones in your body.
- Get some sun—Vitamin D is a powerful mood booster.

If you are experiencing stress—like most of us do—you should take time to make a positive change. Additionally, don't be afraid to ask for help from a loved one or a medical professional. Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

<https://www.dnaweekly.com/blog/stress-awareness-month/>

<https://blog.myfitnesspal.com/31-ways-to-reduce-stress-in-your-life/>

