

HEALTHY @ HOME



STRESS RELIEF

Stress comes and goes in most people's lives. Days of juggling work, families, and other commitments can leave us feeling drained and overwhelmed. Below are some practical tips to help manage stress and improve your mental and emotional health:



- **Step outside for fresh air and sunshine** – Exposure to sunlight is thought to increase the brain's release of serotonin which is associated with boosting mood and helping you feel calm and focused.
- **Unplug** – Disconnecting regularly from social media, the news, and even Netflix can do wonders for your well-being. Doing so can help to improve your overall outlook on life, enhance relationships with family and friends, enhance productivity and grant you the satisfaction of simply enjoying the moment.
- **Practice Breathing Exercises** – Deep breathing exercises can help activate your parasympathetic nervous system, which controls the relaxation response. While shallow breathing causes stress, deep breathing oxygenates your blood, helps center your body, and clears your mind. Give it a try: Imagine that your belly is like a balloon, and as you inhale, you are filling up that balloon. As you exhale, that balloon is deflating. This allows the lungs to expand to full capacity and bring more oxygen in.
- **Exercise** – Physical Activity in almost any form can boost your feel-good endorphins and distract you from daily worries.
- **Declutter/organize an area of your home** – Researchers found that living or working in a cluttered environment can inhibit your ability to focus and process information, leading to stress, feelings of being overwhelmed and anxiety. Begin by starting small. Choose one area of your home at a time to clean out and organize.
- **Phone a friend** – Confiding in a friend can help to calm your worries and ease any fears. A reassuring voice, even for a minute, can put everything in perspective. The support, encouragement, and love of friends and family are a key component to living a healthy lifestyle.

TAKING IT FURTHER: Be sure to check out this video, where Kira Parker, Health & Wellness Director, demonstrates how to make a stress ball at home with a few simple materials.

Disclaimer: Tips shared in this article are not a replacement for professional medical help. Please seek counsel from your doctor if you have extreme feelings of stress, anxiety, or depression.