

**Stressed spelled backwards is
Desserts!**

Benefits of Stress Management

- Relaxes the mind and body bringing mental clarity.
- Lowers stress hormones like cortisol.
- Lowers blood pressure and hypertension.
- Helps with pain relief.
- Increases motivation.
- Improves focus and concentration.
- Helps lower irritability.
- Can boost the immune system.
- Eliminate unwanted habits.
- Can help disengage physical symptoms.



The information in this guide has been accumulated from current medical literature and is generally accepted by the medical community. However, this information is not meant as a substitute for personal medical advice. If you have worrisome symptoms or conditions, contact a physician immediately.

Dr. Martha Watson
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Managing Stress

Filled with a variety of practical tips and advice, this brochure is an essential guide for managing stress.



- Stress Triggers
- Lifestyle Changes
- Stress Management
- Stretching Exercises
- Diaphragmatic Breathing
- Relaxation Techniques

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Stress Triggers and Symptoms

- Stress is fundamentally internal - it is the reaction that we bring to a situation.
- Stress releases cortisol, which is a hormone that can create tension, fatigue, mental foginess, sleeplessness and more.
- Stress can compromise the immune system and lead to anxiety, depression and illness.
- Typical stress triggers can include caffeine, noises, relationship or family issues, work issues and even the news.
- Symptoms of stress can include loss of appetite, sleep problems, anger, crying, headaches, trouble concentrating or focusing and even a loss of interest in daily activities.
- Stress can make it difficult to make decisions leaving you feeling powerless.
- Stress can cause irritability and restlessness.
- Stress can cause you to feel anxious about the future.



Lifestyle Changes To Combat Stress

- Try doing one thing at a time - Multitasking can cause stress. It's important to realize not everything needs to be done immediately.
- Connect Socially - Spending time with friends and loved ones can be rejuvenating.
- Get your mind off your problems by reading a good book, watching a funny movie or even taking a walk if you can.
- Find Support - Sometimes just talking to someone can help you release stress.
- Give yourself a break - Get a massage, get your nails done, or do something to treat yourself.
- Take good care of yourself - Get plenty of sleep, eat a well-balanced diet, get some exercise and maintain a normal routine.
- Realize that not everything needs to be done perfectly - your time is valuable and you can choose how you want to spend it.



Stretching exercises

Try some simple stretching exercises to release muscle tension. When you stretch, you not only relax and soothe your muscles you also calm your mind.

Forward Lean

1. Gently lean forward in your chair.
2. Lower your head to your knees.
3. Hold this position for 30 seconds, or as long as you can.

Supported Rest

1. Lie down on a carpeted floor or blanket with your knees bent.
2. Rest your arms at your sides.
3. Rest your calves, not your thighs, on a chair or a couch.
4. Hold for approximately 5 minutes or as long as you like.

Backward Stretch

1. Stand in a comfortable position with your feet apart slightly.
2. Put your hands on your lower back and gently bend backwards a few times, going back only a few inches.
3. Hold for 5 seconds or however long you like.



Neck Turn and Tilt

1. Gently turn your head to the right and then the left, holding for approximately 5 seconds on each side, being careful not to strain your neck.
2. Gently tilt your neck to the right and then the left so each ear is over each shoulder, being careful not to strain your neck.
3. You may also want to try rolling your neck, very gently, to release muscle tension.

Shoulder Shrug

1. Standing or sitting, raise your shoulders up towards your ears, holding for approximately 5 seconds or whatever is comfortable.
2. Relax and repeat!

Leg and Foot Stretch

1. Gently lift the left leg flexing the foot while the leg is lifted.
2. Gently lift the right leg, repeating the same procedure.

Diaphragmatic Breathing

The diaphragmatic breathing technique is designed to help you use the diaphragm correctly while breathing. It helps to:

- Strengthen the diaphragm.
- Decrease the work of breathing by slowing the rate of breathing.
- Decreases oxygen demand.
- Helps you use less effort and energy to breathe



Diaphragmatic Breathing Technique

1. You can lie down. Sit or stand to practice this exercise. Get comfortable and relax your muscles. Simply start by a few deep breath exhalations.
2. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other hand just above your waistline. (This is the location of your diaphragm) Use your hands to feel the movements as you breathe.
3. Focus your breathing to feel your hand move placed on your diaphragm.
4. Breathe in a rhythm pattern consistently, whatever pace that is right for you. Practice this breathing technique as often as you can and at least for about 5-

10 minutes 3-4 times a day if possible. This type of deep breathing is great for stress and it helps calm and relax you.

Relaxation Techniques: Deep Breathing

By turning on the "Relaxation Response", you can evoke a very calm state of mind.

1. Begin by closing your eyes and breathing in deeply, holding the breath for at least 5 seconds.
2. Exhale the breath slowly while relaxing all of the muscles of your body.
3. Repeat the words "I am calm and relaxed" until you begin relaxing.

Relaxation Techniques: Imagery

Imagery is a wonderful way to take a mini-vacation in your mind.

1. Close your eyes and imagine in your mind a peaceful and relaxing place like a beach or a park.
2. Allow your imagination to feel and see everything, using all of your senses. Feel the warm sun, hear the ocean or watch the birds.
3. If stressful thoughts enter your mind, simply acknowledge them and dismiss them.
4. This technique can be combined with any of the breathing techniques!