

Managing stress

Yes, you can manage stress. It may be challenging, but you can do it!



Stress is a part of life—and it's not all bad. When we need to, our reaction to stress, the fight-or-flight response, allows us to do some amazing things. Most of the time, however, the way we respond to stress does not really help us. We need to find ways to relax. "Good" sources of stress, like winning the lottery, usually don't harm us. It's the "bad" stress—such as losing your job or getting a divorce—that can cause negative responses like loss of sleep, upset stomach, high blood pressure and increased headaches.

Identify the things that make you feel stressed on a regular basis.

Is there anything you can eliminate?

- Sometimes we can walk away from some of our stressors.
- Although we have to deal with our other stressors, we can find ways to minimize the negative effects they have on us.

Ways to minimize stress and its effects:

- Talk to a friend.
- Do something fun.
- Do some deep breathing exercises.
- Take a hot bath or shower.
- Sit down and enjoy a hobby or craft.
- Listen to music.
- Eat a healthy diet, including fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Limit sugar, fat and caffeine.
- Laugh.
- Meditate.
- Get some exercise.
- Go for a walk.

What other healthy ideas do you have for managing stress? Make a personal list of stressors—and solutions—and think about how you can do some problem-solving of your own.

To learn more about stress, go to Fallon Health's website, fallonhealth.org. From the home page, click **Healthwise® Knowledgebase** under **Quick links**.

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