

The real deal on stress

Stress is the body's way of responding to an experience. It can show up in many ways. Finding healthy ways to cope with stress can have a positive impact on your health.

What causes stress?

Stress can be caused by internal and external factors.

Examples of internal factors are:

- Uncertainty and lack of control
- Thinking or talking negatively about yourself
- Setting expectations too high
- Fears or anxieties

Examples of external factors are:

- Conflicts with family and friends
- Work related issues
- Chronic health issues
- Major life changes
- Financial problems

Signs of stress

The body can't tell the difference between physical and mental threats. If you are around things that stress you out often, your body is continually dealing with stress. Feeling stressed for a long time can cause problems with sleeping, digestion or make you feel down and even lead to depression.

Dealing with stress

Get in the habit of knowing when you are becoming stressed. What are the signs that you are stressed out? When you know how your body deals with stress you can take action early on to keep your stress levels low. You can't get rid of stress, but you can control how you respond to it.

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Questions?

Please call 877-277-7281 or email careprograms@modahealth.com.



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> Stress and your health

Healthy ways to deal with stress

- > **Just say no.** Don't take on more than you can handle.
- > **Express your feelings.** Talk to a trusted person or a healthcare professional about your stressors.
- > **Set time aside for relaxation.** Stretching muscles, deep breathing and meditation can be helpful ways to lower stress levels.
- > **Exercise.** Physical activity can help reduce stress levels. Even a 10-minute walk can do the trick.
- > **End your day with an "I am thankful for" list** to focus on the positive parts of the day and the things you are thankful for.
- > **Eat a healthy diet** with three meals a day. This will improve your energy and moods.
- > **Do something you enjoy,** such as read, listen to music or play with a pet.
- > **Spend time with people** who are positive and supportive.
- > **Watch something funny.** Laughing lowers stress levels.
- > **Get plenty of sleep.** Most people need at least eight hours each night.

Find more information on coping with stress:

American Diabetes Association
diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/complications/mental-health/stress.html

American Heart Association
heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/StressManagement/Stress-Management_UCM_001082_SubHomePage.jsp

Mayo Clinic
mayoclinic.com/health/stress-management/MY00435