



4 ways to shake off stress

If your stress levels are chronically high, your health can suffer. Here are four common stressors and ways you can try to shake them off.

1 Me time: Do you make time for everyone but yourself? Manage to get everything done for everyone else, but make no time for your own needs. If this sounds like you, you are on the fast track to burning out.

Shake it off: Prioritize events and tasks that are most important to you. Check your calendar, make a list and learn how to say 'no' when you have reached your limit.

2 Finances: Do you spend time stressing over money? According to the American Psychological Association, almost three-quarters of Americans experience financial stress at least some of the time, and nearly a quarter of us experience extreme financial stress.

Shake it off: Sit down, set a budget and stick to it. Be realistic about how much money you make, how much money you spend and identify places to cut back if you need to.

3 Pursuit of perfection: Do you place unrealistic expectations on yourself? Always feel like you could have done more? Your perfectionist tendencies could be a recipe for disaster.

Shake it off: Set realistic expectations for yourself and be flexible in your approach. Use mindfulness exercises, like guided breathing or meditation, to help you stay in the present moment.

4 Running on empty: Do you tend to get sick frequently, feel tired or have no energy? When we lack healthy coping strategies for stress, our bodies let us know.

Shake it off: Consuming a healthy diet, high in fruits and veggies, provides the nourishment your immune system needs to fight off illness. Regular exercise lowers your stress levels. And don't forget shuteye! Sleeping at least 7 hours provides our bodies with time to rest and repair.

Is it time to seek help?

Reach out to a friend, family member or coworker to share what you are feeling and get support.

Need even more help? Use these national hotlines:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Hopeline: 800-442-HOPE (4673)

ConnectiCare members can get support using the behavioral health benefit through Optum. Call 1-888-946-4658 or visit liveandworkwell.com, the online access code is connecticare.

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Questions? Get in touch!

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In person: At a ConnectiCare center, Monday – Saturday
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Sources:

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<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>

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