

HDHeartbeat

A Health Designs Newsletter



Stress and Your Health: Why Managing it Matters

Stress is not inherently a bad thing for the body as it can help motivate us and keep us safe from potential threats. However, it is when we experience too much poorly managed stress, that we can see all systems of our body feeling its effects. This includes musculoskeletal, respiratory, cardiovascular, endocrine, gastrointestinal, nervous, and reproductive systems. The following are just some of the negative effects chronic stress can have on our health.

- Headaches and migraines
- Muscle tension and pain in the lower back, upper back, hips, and shoulders
- Shortness of breath and/or rapid breathing
- Increased heart rate and blood pressure over time can damage delicate blood vessels
- Poor nutrition choices that can affect cholesterol levels
- Decreased immune system function.
- Affects the brain-gut communication, triggering pain, bloating, nausea, and vomiting if stress is severe enough.
- Continual activation of nervous system causes strain on the body by continuously triggering physical reactions.

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10-Minute Stress Relievers You Can do Anywhere

Stress will inevitably affect all of us. Instead of trying to avoid it, we should be utilizing strategies that help us work through stressful events. This section will discuss some stress relief techniques that you can utilize the next time you find yourself in a panic.

- Deep breathing. A simple and effective way to calm your nervous system while bringing oxygen rich blood to your brain to boost cognition.
- Task dump. Let's face it; whether you're at home or at work, day-to-day tasks can build up. Write a list of all the tasks and prioritize either by importance or by what you have the energy level for.
- Taking a 10-minute walk helps pump that oxygen-rich blood to our brains while also releasing endorphins to boost our moods.
- Listen to music. Curate a playlist specifically for when times get tough. Take it a step farther and dance the stress out.
- Use your sense of smell. Whether it's by candle or essential oils, scents such as lavender, chamomile, eucalyptus, or bergamot can have calming properties.
- Stretch at your desk to relieve muscular tension associated with our body's stress response.

HD MONTHLY CHALLENGE

We challenge you to take charge of your mental well-being. Which strategies will you adopt from this newsletter?

Crispy Roasted Chickpeas

- 3, 15oz cans of low sodium garbanzo beans

- 1-2 tbsp olive oil

For Sweet Flavor:

- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- ½ tsp cinnamon

For Savory Flavor:

- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp dried dill
- ½ tsp dried parsley
- ½ tsp salt

For Spicy Flavor:

- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp paprika
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp salt



1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Drain and rinse chickpeas underwater. Air dry chickpeas completely on paper towel.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and lightly spray with cooking oil.
4. Spread chickpeas evenly over sheet and bake for 20-30 minutes.
5. Make the different spice mixes by combining their respective ingredients into separate bowls.
6. Separate roasted chickpeas evenly into three separate bowls.
7. For the savory and spicy flavors coat chickpeas in about ½ to 1 tbsp of olive oil and coat with spice mixture. Toss until evenly coated.
8. For the sweet flavor pour maple syrup and cinnamon onto chickpeas and toss to coat. Bake for another 5-10 minutes.
9. Serve immediately.

Building Resilience: Strategies to Handle Stress Effectively

When stress management is discussed, resilience will always accompany those discussions. That's because resilience and resilience building is the foundation for which stress management can thrive. Resilience is defined as one's ability to adapt to life's stressful events whether it be birth of a child, job loss, or death of a loved one. Resilience is not an innate skill that some people are born with; rather it is the accumulation of behaviors, thoughts, and actions that help one cope with life. Consider adding the following to your resilience building toolkit.

- Adopt behaviors that support physical health such as mindful movement, eating nutritionally-dense meals, and aim for quality sleep of 7-9 hours each night.
- Practice gratitude by writing down at least one thing you are thankful for each day.
- Lean back on your community whether it's your own family members, close friends, or a colleague you work closely with and are comfortable confiding in.
- Practice goal setting using the S.M.A.R.T method. Goal setting can give you purpose and motivate you by letting you see all the goal posts you achieve.
- If you have exhausted all efforts to work through an issue, sometimes it is best to accept what things are. This will allow you to focus your energy and resources on things that you can change.
- Learn from your past mistakes or successes. In past stressful events what worked best for you to manage the stress that came along with it?

STRESS RELIEF FROM THE HECTIC WORKDAY

In this newsletter, we talked a lot about stress. Stress is present in our everyday lives regardless of how big or small it is OR if we want it or not. How we respond to stress makes all the difference. Click the icon below to learn more about long-term stress management.

