

Take Action Now

Stress and Heart Disease

What's the Link Between Stress and Heart Disease?

When you are stressed, your body reacts by releasing adrenaline. This causes your heart rate to speed up and your blood pressure to rise. When stress is constant (or chronic), your body stays in “high gear” off and on for days or weeks. While the link between stress and heart disease is not clear, chronic stress that causes an increase in heart rate and blood pressure may damage your artery walls.

How Can I Reduce Stress?

- **Sit quietly for 15 to 20 minutes.**
Breathe deeply and visualize a peaceful place. Getting away from stressful thoughts can relax your mind and body.
- **Learn to live with the things that you cannot change.**
Being angry for a long time is not good for you or your body.
- **Share your problems with others.**
Getting your worries off your mind can help you feel better.
- **Take time each day to have fun doing a physical activity.**
Exercise is a great way to get rid of stress.
- **Live a healthy lifestyle.**
Eating a healthy diet, limiting alcohol intake, and not smoking help to make your body as strong as it can be.



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Managing Stress at Work

You spend much of your time at work. Use these strategies when you feel that you are getting stressed out:

- Leave the room and think about something positive.
- Take a few deep breaths to relax.
- Try to see the good in all situations.
- After work, take some time to unwind.
- Talk to your doctor to find help with managing stress.



To Reduce Harmful Stress, Learn What Triggers Your Stress.

Things that trigger you to feel stress are called your stressors. Figure out how you react to them. Track your stressors here and think about how you can handle the situations in a different way. Remember, how you respond to stress is your choice!

Stressor	How I react	What I can do differently

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