

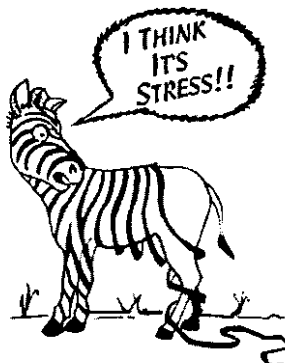
HSS Safety Share - *Stress Management Tips*

Stress can have serious effects on your health. It is not good for a person's body or mind to be under constant stress. You need to have an outlet for your anxiety or it can literally kill you. Using stress management techniques to help keep your stress level down can make a huge difference in the way you feel. Stress has many side effects such as body pains, headaches, flu like symptoms, and so many more. If your job causes you to feel stressed often, try some of the following stress management techniques to help you feel better.

Stress Management Tips

- Somethings are out of your control. Do not take on more than you can handle and don't get stressed over problems you cannot control.
- Take a little walk around the office. Exercise is a great way to relieve stress.
- Cut back on the caffeine during the day. It can make you agitated and on edge.
- Breathe deeply. It will help you relax.
- Staying organized and keeping your workplace clean will help reduce stress.
- Send yourself flowers. Not only will they brighten up the room, the scent will help boost endorphins in your brain which signal happiness.
- Snack on crackers, pretzels or nuts. They will boost your energy which in turn will help fight stress.
- You can start to feel stressed if you are not getting enough vitamins in your diet. Try adding a daily multi-vitamin to your breakfast.
- Take a break and stare out the window at the birds, clouds and trees. Try to clear your mind and relax. Open your windows. Getting some sun will help boost your attitude.
- Don't slouch. Sitting up straight will help increase blood circulation.

Stress management techniques will help you unwind and relax. Too much stress is never good for anyone. If you feel you are overworked, it is best to request time off to keep your mind and body healthy. Source: <http://workplacesafetyexperts.com/office-safety/stress-management-techniques/>.



Relaxation Exercises

Get comfortable.

Take off your shoes and everything tight (watches, rings, belts, etc.)

Would you turn off the light?

Be aware of how you're feeling right now.

1. Hands and Forearms:

There are many points where tension can build. There are five individual fingers—the various sections of your fingers (tips, knuckles), the palm of your hand, the back of your hand, your wrist, and the forearm muscles.

- a. Consider each of these points when you make a fist and tighten your muscles.
- b. Now: spread fingers outward like a fan.
 - A. Tense: 2-3-4. Relax: 2-3-4.
 - B. Tense. Relax.
 - C. Tense. Relax.

2. Biceps:

This is the part of the upper arm that bulges when you “make a muscle” like a strong man on the beach.

Bend your arm at the elbow so that your palm faces toward you shoulder. Then apply what is called a counterforce. To do this, try touching your hand to your shoulder, at the same time opposing this movement. Your hand will seem frozen in the air by the 2 opposing forces.

3. Forehead:

Tension is often felt most strongly in the facial muscles. Every time you talk, smile, frown, or cry, you are using the muscles in your face.

To tense the muscles in your forehead, try lifting your eyebrows high as if you wanted them to touch the top of your head. —An alternative method is to frown or “knit your brows.”

4. Cheeks and Nose:

Squint your eyes and wrinkle your nose. Don't be afraid of making funny faces.

5. Jaws:

These muscles can be tensed by clenching your teeth together hard and pulling back on the corners of your mouth.

6. Lips and Tongue:

With teeth separated, press your lips together, and press your tongue against the roof of your mouth.

7. Neck and Throat:

- a. Pull your chin down as if trying to touch it to your chest. Now apply a counter pressure, or opposing force, to stop your chin.
- b. And now—again for your neck—touch your ears to your shoulders—first the left ear, then the right

8. Shoulders and Upper Back:

- a. Pull your shoulders up as if they were being held by strings attached to the ceiling.
- b. Then arch them back as if trying to touch your shoulder blades together.

9. Chest:

To tense the muscles in your chest, take a deep breath and hold it for five seconds. Exhale in an even and smooth manner. Don't breathe out so slowly that you exert effort holding air in—and don't breathe in so fast that you push air out. Exhale at whatever rate requires the least effort.

10. Stomach:

The stomach muscles are most easily tensed either by making your stomach hard—pulling your stomach in and holding it tight—or pushing your stomach out.

- a. First, pull in your stomach.
- b. Now, push your stomach out.

11. Thighs and Buttocks:

- a. Your thighs and buttocks can be tensed by consciously trying to tighten them while pressing your heels into the ground.
- b. An alternative method involves pressing your knees toward each other at the same time applying pressure to keep them apart. When doing this, pretend a rubber ball is between your knees and preventing them from touching each other.

12. Calves:

- a. Point your toes up toward your head.
- b. Now, point your toes down and away from your head.

13. Feet:

These muscles can easily cramp, and you want to avoid that. Be certain that you tense these muscles only very slightly.

Tense your feet by pointing them slightly down—turning them inward and curling your toes.

Now, with your eyes still closed, go over your entire body—going from forehead to toes. Is there any area that still feels tense? Take that area and go through the tense and relax cycle one more time.