

Week 1

Stress Management



Weekly Health Tips
We Are One (WAO)

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to our Weekly Health Tips series! We're thrilled to begin with Week 1, focusing on Stress Management.

Each week, we'll explore key health topics, offering practical tips and resources to boost your well-being.

Join us as we kick off our journey to better health, starting with effective strategies for managing stress.

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Stress Management

What is it?

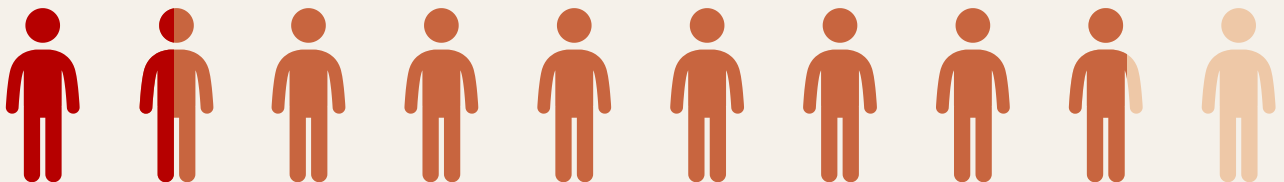
Stress management encompasses a wide range of approaches and practices designed to reduce and cope with stress. It includes identifying causes of stress, understanding how stress affects the body and mind, and implementing techniques to minimize its negative impacts.

Why is it important?

Proper stress management is vital to maintain good overall health and well-being. Chronic stress can cause a wide range of health problems, including hypertension, heart disease, weakened immune systems, anxiety disorders, and depression. Individuals who learn how to effectively manage stress can enhance their physical and mental health.

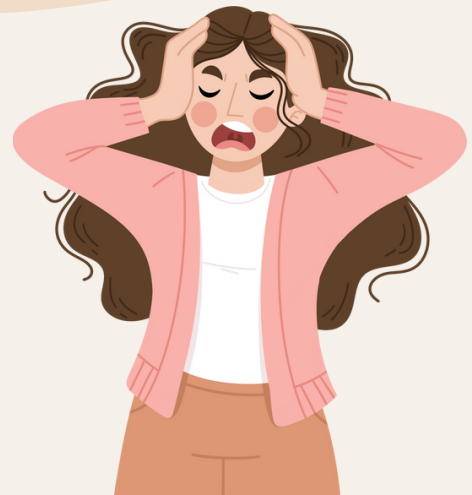
Did you know?

In 2023, according to a [Cigna Healthcare Vitality Study](#), close to 90% of Singaporeans reported feeling stressed. Furthermore, 16% of them felt the stress was “not manageable”.



What Causes Stress?

Work-related pressures, financial problems, relationship issues, major changes in life (such as moving, divorce, or losing a loved one), academic obligations, and health issues are all potential sources of stress. Furthermore, environmental variables such as noise, pollution, and congestion can increase stress levels.



From the study, the top 3 causes in Singapore are:



Current cost of Living

SG	60%
Global	47%
APAC	41%

Uncertainty about the future

SG	41%
Global	38%
APAC	40%

Personal finance

SG	41%
Global	38%
APAC	33%

How Does Stress Affect Us?

Stress activates the body's "fight or flight" response, which releases stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. While this reaction is essential for survival in dangerous conditions, persistent activation of the stress response can be harmful to health. Prolonged stress can raise blood pressure, weaken immune system, cause inflammation, and increase the risk of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.



Signs of Stress

Recognizing the signs of stress is essential for early intervention and management. According to HealthHub, our body may send out various physical, behavioural, cognitive, and emotional warning signs, such as:



Physical

- Headaches, migraines
- Stomach aches
- Muscle tension
- Rapid heartbeats
- Sweaty palms
- Trembling
- Chronic fatigue



Behavioral

- Acting in a defensive, aggressive or impulsive manner
- Nervous habits (e.g. stammering or biting nails)
- Avoidance of tasks
- Withdrawal from social activities
- Drinking or smoking excessively
- Sleep problems
- Crying
- Loss of appetite or overeating



Cognitive

- Poor concentration
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty in organising and making decisions



Emotional

- Anxiety and being bad-tempered
- Excessive worrying, moody
- Sadness, fear
- Overwhelmed
- Restlessness or irritability



How Can We Manage Stress?

Effective stress management requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the physical, emotional, and behavioural aspects of stress. Some tips may include:



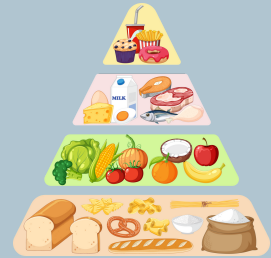
Relaxation techniques

Such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, guided visualisation, and mindfulness meditation.



Physical activity

Engaging in regular exercise helps reduce stress hormones and promotes the release of endorphins, chemicals in the brain that act as natural mood lifters.



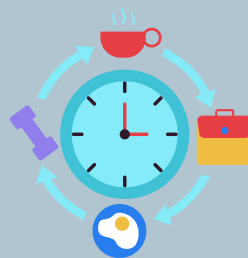
Healthy Habits

Prioritizing adequate sleep, maintaining a balanced diet, limiting alcohol and caffeine intake, and avoiding tobacco can help support the body's ability to cope with stress.



Social support

Connecting with friends, family, or support groups can provide emotional validation, practical assistance, and a sense of belonging, all of which can buffer the effects of stress.



Time management

Learning to prioritize tasks, set realistic goals, and delegate responsibilities can help reduce feelings of overwhelm and improve productivity.



Seeking professional help

When stress becomes overwhelming or unmanageable, seeking guidance from a therapist, counsellor, or healthcare provider can be beneficial.



Stress Assessment Tool

You can take a stress assessment test to find out how stressed you are and where you need to improve. One such tool can be found here ([Be Mindful Online](#)).



Scan QR code
for a Stress Test

This assessment will give you a better understanding of how stressed you are right now and provide personalised recommendations on how to handle stress.

“

The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.

”

- William James



Self-Help Tools and Helplines

National Care Hotline (8am-12am daily)

1800 202 6868

Mental well-being

- Fei Yue's Online Counselling Service [Website](#)
- Institute of Mental Health's Mental Health Helpline (24-hour) 6389 2222
- Samaritans of Singapore (Hotline) 1800 221 4444
- Samaritans of Singapore (24-hour) 1767
- Samaritans of Singapore (WhatsApp) 9151 1767
- Silver Ribbon Singapore 6385 3714

Marital and parenting issues

- Community Psychology Hub's Online Counselling platform [Website](#)

Violence or abuse

- Big Love Child Protection Specialist Centre 6445 0400
- HEART @ Fei Yue Child Protection Specialist Centre 6819 9170
- PAVE Integrated Services for Individual and Family Protection 6555 0390
- Project StART 6476 1482
- TRANS SAFE Centre 6449 9088

Counselling

- TOUCHline (Counselling) 1800 377 2252

For other Helplines and mental health-related support

- BELLE, Beyond the Label helpbot [Website](#)
- Ministry of Social and Family Development Contact Us [Website](#)

