

APRIL

STRESS AWARENESS

• MONTH •



What is Stress?

Stress is the body's natural response to challenges or demands, whether they come from external or internal factors. It can affect how you feel, think, and act, and may cause physical symptoms, such as a fast heartbeat, sweating, or trouble breathing. Too much stress over time can impact both your mental and physical health.

DID YOU KNOW? - APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF ALL DOCTOR VISITS ARE RELATED TO STRESS.

How Your Body Responds to Stress

When you experience stress, your body reacts in several ways. Your pupils may dilate, your breathing and heart rate speed up, and both your blood pressure and blood sugar levels can rise. You might also notice that your muscles become tense and you start to sweat more than usual.

Stress Relievers:

- **Get active:** Any kind of physical activity you enjoy, such as walking, dancing, or cleaning can help reduce stress
- **Avoid unhealthy habits:** Stay away from coping methods like excessive caffeine, alcohol, smoking, overeating, or drug use, as they can worsen stress
- **Meditate:** Practicing meditation or deep breathing can calm your mind and help you feel more balanced

Preventing Burnout

Burnout develops gradually, but there are steps you can take to prevent it.

- Set realistic goals and practice healthy habits, such as getting enough sleep and eating a nutritious diet. Delegate tasks when possible, and do not hesitate to say "no" if you are feeling overwhelmed.
- Take regular breaks to relax and spend time on activities that help you recharge. Consider going outside for fresh air, taking a walk, or listening to music or a podcast.

Digital Overload

Digital overload happens when using technology, such as smartphones, computers, or TVs, exposes you to more information than your brain can comfortably process. You might notice your stress levels increase if you spend too much time on your devices. Research shows that more screen time can lead to higher stress.

Tips:

- **Turn off notifications:** Only allow calls or messages from important contacts
- **Create tech-free times:** Set aside parts of your day without any devices
- **Delete distracting apps:** Remove apps that consume most of your time

Emotional Wellbeing Solutions

EMR provides employees and their dependents with confidential access to Optum's Emotional Wellbeing Solutions, offering up to six (6) counseling sessions per issue, per year—either in person or by phone. Licensed professionals are available to support a wide range of personal and emotional concerns. For assistance, call **866.374.6061** or visit **www.liveandworkwell.com** and use company access code: **EMR**.

Sources

- [Slow Down](#)
- [Success Over Stress](#)
- [Digital Overload](#)

Please note: This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult your healthcare provider for medical concerns. Please refer to your plan documents for specific benefit details and limitations.

