

# 7 SIMPLE WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

*Stress is a normal part of life. But when this feeling becomes too overwhelming, it can take a toll on your health.*

If you, your child, or someone you know are thinking about suicide or self-harm, call or text 988, the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

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**CREATING A HEALTHIER KENTUCKY**  
At UK HealthCare, we're leading the way to help all Kentuckians live their healthiest lives.

Here are some proven ways to manage your stress:

1. **Get active.** Exercise can help reduce your stress levels and boost your mood. Pick an activity that you already enjoy so that you look forward to it.
2. **Eat a well-balanced diet.** Consuming nutrient-rich meals with a variety of fruits and vegetables is key to both your physical and mental health. Try to avoid excessive amounts of caffeine or alcohol.
3. **Limit your screen time.** Spending too much time on your phone is associated with higher stress levels and troubled sleep, which in turn can also contribute to stress.
4. **Connect with loved ones.** Spending time with a friend or family member can bring you a sense of calm. Having a strong support system can help you get through difficult times, too.
5. **Try meditation.** Meditation can take many forms. You could repeat a mantra, or word or phrase, accompanied by deep breathing techniques, or you could simply sit still and appreciate the moment.
6. **Set boundaries.** If you already have too many responsibilities on your plate, it's OK to say, "No." Taking on too much can only add to your stress.
7. **Journal your thoughts.** Writing down your feelings is one way to release pent-up emotions. This journal is just for you, so you can be as honest as possible.



#### Fast fact

If left unchecked, stress can increase your risk for several health conditions, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes.