
Did You Know!

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SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE HEALTH CENTER

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GETTING A HANDLE ON STRESS

10 Proven Strategies for Managing Stress

We all need a little stress in our lives to help us accomplish the tasks set before us. A little stress is a good thing; a lot of stress is a bad thing. Too much stress can wreak havoc with our sleep, appetite, mood, and our ability to accomplish those projects that need to be completed.

- 1. WORK OFF STRESS** - Physical activity allows you an outlet for mental stress. Take a walk, dance in your room, visit Angela Athletic Center, or play Frisbee in the green spaces.
- 2. AVOID SELF-MEDICATION** - The ability to handle stress comes from within you, not from the outside.
- 3. SLEEP AND EAT WELL** - Lack of sleep can lessen your ability to deal with stress by making you more irritable. Most people need at least 7-8 hours of sleep out of every 24 hours. If stress repeatedly prevents you from sleeping, you should inform your doctor. Similarly, unhealthy or irregular eating habits interfere with your ability to cope with stress.
- 4. BALANCE WORK AND RECREATION** - "All work and no play can make you a nervous wreck." Schedule time for recreation to relax your mind and body.
- 5. DO SOMETHING FOR OTHERS** - Sometimes when you are distressed, you concentrate too much on yourself and your situation. When this happens, it is often wise to do something for someone else, and get your mind off of yourself. There is an extra bonus in this technique - it can help make friends.
- 6. TAKE ONE THING AT TIME** - It is self-defeating to try to tackle all your tasks at once. Instead, set priorities and work on the most urgent.
- 7. GIVE IN OCCASSIONALLY** - If you find the source of your stress is other people, try giving in instead of fighting and insisting you are always right. You may find that others will begin to give in too.
- 8. LEARN TO ACCEPT WHAT YOU CANNOT CHANGE** - If the problem is beyond your control at this time, try your best to accept it until you can change it. It beats spinning your wheels and getting nowhere.
- 9. TALK OUT YOUR WORRIES** - Sometimes another person can help you see a new side to the problem and thus, a new solution. If you find yourself becoming preoccupied with emotional problems, it might be wise to seek a professional listener; call and make an appointment at the **Counseling Center, 574-284-4565**. Talking with a professional is not admitting defeat. It is acknowledging you are an intelligent human being who knows when to ask for assistance.
- 10. LEARN AND PRACTICE A RELAXATION TECHNIQUE** - Deep breathing, muscle relaxation, and visualization can help you feel less tense and more in control.