

Checking In

with you



Stress and anxiety are normal reactions to the demands of life. They manifest in the body emotionally (feelings), mentally (thoughts), and physically (the way your body feels). Although they are normal human reactions to threatening or worrying situations, persistent stress and anxiety can become overwhelming and affect the quality of your everyday life. Identifying how stress and anxiety show up for you and what may be triggering those emotions increases your self-awareness, enabling you to know when to implement self-care practices and coping strategies to combat them.

It is okay to ask for help. Seek guidance or assistance from an outside support system, such as a friend, family member, or mental health professional if you find your self-care and coping strategies are not effectively managing your emotional well-being or if you are struggling to navigate difficult challenges in your life. Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength and self-awareness, and it can make a significant difference in your overall mental and emotional health. Don't hesitate to reach out when you need it; there are people who care about your well-being and are ready to support you on your journey to better mental health.

Answer the below questions in relation to your feelings and thoughts over the last month.

Rate each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 4

0 = Not at all 1 = A Little Bit 2 = Sometimes 3 = Often 4 = Always

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have problems falling asleep or staying asleep | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a habit of clenching my fists, cracking my knuckles, twirling my hair, tapping my fingers or biting my lips. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I feel detached or distant from myself, my body, my physical surroundings, or my memories | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel sad or disappointed often |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I feel worried or uneasy but am not sure why | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a hard time finding fun things to do. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I feel overwhelmed with my life | <input type="checkbox"/> I find myself eating when I'm not hungry as a response to difficult feelings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I get frequent headaches or muscle tensions | <input type="checkbox"/> I am easily irritated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I withdraw from family, friends, and isolate myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Others tell me that I seem tense or upset |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have difficulty concentrating. | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel that I never have time for myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I feel tired during the day. | |

Add the numbers from the assessment.
The total score can range from 0-60.

0-19—Low Stress
20-39—Medium Stress
40-60—High Stress

My Score

Everyone has stressful experiences and will occasionally have feelings that align with some of the statements in the previous activity. It happens to all of us during times of uncertainty or when we have taken on too much. When there are too many demands and too few resources to cope, it's helpful to take time to realign yourself and identify what is contributing to your stress.

There are healthy and unhealthy ways of dealing with stress. Healthy ways can help to reduce stress and relieve symptoms. Unhealthy ways of dealing with stress mask the symptoms and may introduce new stressors. Be sure to check in with yourself and assess your mental and physical needs as you move through your day.

Responses to Stress

Physical

- fatigue
- nausea
- muscles tremors
- twitches
- headaches
- visual difficulties
- vomiting
- grinding teeth
- dizziness
- profuse sweating
- chills
- fainting
- chest pain
- difficulty breathing
- elevated blood pressure
- rapid heartbeat

Cognitive

- confusion
- poor attention
- guilt
- poor decisions
- poor concentration
- memory problems
- hypervigilance
- increased or decreased awareness of surroundings
- poor problem solving

Emotional

- anxiety
- grief
- denial
- severe panic
- emotional shock
- fear
- uncertainty
- depression
- unpredictable emotional responses
- apprehension
- feeling overwhelmed
- intense anger or sadness
- irritability
- agitation

Behavioral

- change in activity
- change in speech patterns
- withdrawal or isolation
- emotional outbursts
- sleep disturbances
- increased alcohol consumption or other drug use
- change in usual communication
- loss or increase in appetite
- restlessness

Stress isn't always negative. Our inherent stress response can, in fact, help us conquer hurdles outside of our comfort zone. Nevertheless, if stress becomes too overwhelming or persists for an extended period, it's important to take the time to check in with yourself and assess what may be triggering you.

Social Support

Sometimes, merely engaging in conversation can be sufficient. When we openly discuss our problems, it can alleviate some stress-related symptoms.

Emotional Management

Stress can trigger a wide range of emotions. When feelings like anxiety, self-doubt, or anger are overlooked, they can exacerbate the underlying issue. Strive to address your emotions in a healthy manner rather than dismissing or suppressing them.

Life Balance

Regardless of the area—whether it's career, family, spirituality, or relationships—strive to maintain a balance between what holds the most significance for you. Stress can easily build up when one aspect excessively overshadows the rest.

Basic Needs

During times of high stress, basic needs are often the first to be neglected. When you disregard your sleep, diet, exercise, self-care, and other fundamental needs, your health and mental well-being may suffer, thereby intensifying stress.