

Stress Management

Patient Education: Side Effect and Symptom Management Series



Stress is the feeling of tension or strain in your mind or body. Different people feel stress in different ways. You may get a headache or feel very tired when you are stressed. Or you may feel confused, sad and very worried. Stress can also affect how you act when you are with other people. You may find that you lash out easily or do not want to hang out with others.

What causes stress?

The feeling of stress is your body's normal reaction to some sort of change or event. There are 2 types of stress.

The type of stress that you have depends on what causes the stress:

1. **Distress** is an uncomfortable stress. You may feel distress when it is hard to deal with an event or a change. You may feel distress after an injury or during a hospital stay.
2. **Eustress** is stress caused by something that you think is good. You may feel eustress when you are packing for a vacation or planning a wedding.

What can I do to reduce my stress?

It is normal and sometimes even good to feel stress, but having a lot of stress over a long period of time can be unhealthy. Finding ways to reduce your stress is important so that your body can get back to normal.

There are ways that you can manage your stress. Tell your team if you feel stress.

Talk to your team about ways that you can reduce your stress:

- Write in a journal
- Listen to music
- Work out or exercise
- Do something that you enjoy, like a hobby
- Play with your pet
- Practice skills that can help you to relax:
 - Diaphragmatic Breathing
 - Guided Imagery
 - Autogenic Relaxation
 - Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Call your UNC Recreational Therapy and Child Life team member if you have any questions.

984-974-1000

09/16; 4.3; HDF3680