

4 ways to beat stress - fast

Whether it's work, family matters or another issue, it can be hard to relax and wind down when stress hits. Our body has a physical response when we feel stressed or upset. Most people will find that their muscles tense, their breathing gets faster, blood pressure may rise and they may even feel ill. Fortunately, there are some quick ways to help stop this physical response, which will help you feel better mentally, too. Try these simple steps to start feeling better right now:

If you have a trusted friend or family member to turn to, call them on the phone if you can. Better yet, step outside and enjoy nature while you talk to them. If you can't reach anyone, pick up some paper and write down your thoughts and feelings. Getting your feelings out with words can help you feel some relief.

4 TALK TO SOMEONE

Whether it's walking, jogging, swimming, kickboxing or another exercise, get your body moving. Exercise releases feel-good brain chemicals and has been shown to help lower stress and anxiety. But, don't wait until you're stressed to exercise! Get into a daily habit to help with everyday stress before it happens.

3 GET UP AND MOVE

1 TAKE SLOW, DEEP BREATHS

Deep breathing is great for the mind and body. It doesn't take any special equipment, and you can do it anywhere. Put a hand on your belly so you can feel it rise and fall as you breathe. Then, take a slow deep breath in through your nose. Feel the belly push out as you do this. Next, slowly breathe out through your mouth, pursing your lips like you're whistling. You should feel the belly push back in as you exhale. Repeat this at least 3 times, or more if needed. Slow, deep breathing helps calm the body's stress response.

2 PUT DOWN THE TECHNOLOGY

It can be tempting to keep scrolling through your phone or zone out in front of the TV when you're feeling overwhelmed or tense. But this may make your stress feel worse. Some research suggests that getting outside and enjoying nature can make you feel better mentally. If you can, take a walk outside in a natural area like a park. Or, sit under a favorite tree or in a hammock with a book or magazine.

