

HOW CAN I MANAGE STRESS BETTER?

STEP ONE

As with almost anything in our lives when it comes to change is becoming aware of the issue. So first you want to become aware of your stressors and how you react to them both emotionally and physically. How do you become better aware of your stressors?

- Take note when you are distressed. Don't ignore or overlook these little moments because they can lead to an increase in your stress levels if allowed to build.
- Take note of how these moments of distress effect you. What is your thought process? What are you telling yourself about these moments? (Are you using negative self-talk vs. positive self-talk?)
- How is your body reacting to these distressed moments? Are you over anxious and feeling nauseated? Or finding it difficult to sleep?

STEP TWO

Once you have become self-aware of your stressors is then recognizing what you can change. This might be done in different ways such as:

- Avoiding or eliminating a stressor from your life completely
- Reducing the intensity or exposure of the stressor. Dealing with a stressful stimuli less or changing how you perceive the stressor's effect on you.
- Devoting time and energy to make a necessary change (e.g., goal setting, time management techniques, and delayed gratification strategies)

STEP THREE

Implement your change techniques and remembering that you may stubble and become stressed. But remember that you have now discovered a new trigger for your stress and can work on avoiding, reducing, or making the necessary change that will allow you to better manage your overall stress.

If you have any questions or would like to make an appointment please contact:

Ed Magalhaes, PhD, LPC

Director of Academic and Counseling Services
Virginia Campus
emagalhaes@vcom.vt.edu
540-231-1944

Or outside counseling services at the New River Community Services:

700 University City Blvd / Blacksburg, VA 24060
Phone: 540-961-8400
(Be sure to identify yourself as a VCOM student)

For emergency care, 24 hours a day, call ACCESS at 540-961-8400

Natalie Fadel, PsyD

Director of Academic and Counseling Services
Carolinas Campus
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Or outside counseling services at Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center:

250 Dewey Avenue / Spartanburg, SC 29303
Phone: (864) 585-0366
(Be sure to identify yourself as a VCOM student)

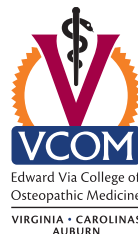
For emergency care, 24 hours a day Crisis Hotline: (864) 585-0366 or 1-800-277-1366

Mary Ann Taylor, PhD

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Or outside counseling services at Auburn Student Counseling Services:

400 Lem Morrison Dr. Suite 2086 / Auburn, AL 36849
Phone: 334-844-5123
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Stress Management

The Center for Institutional, Faculty, and Student Success



Edward Via College of
Osteopathic Medicine
VIRGINIA • CAROLINAS
AUBURN

Stress Management

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is our body's natural response to the physical and psychological changes that we face in our daily lives. Our stress response is a result of our body's defense mechanism known as the "fight-or-flight" reaction. This reaction is activated whenever we face or sense ourselves in danger – be it real or imagined. The stress associated with this reaction can either be good or bad. Good stress has a tendency to help us accomplish goals by helping us to stay focused, energetic, and alert. This in turn helps us to have a greater sense of accomplishment. Bad stress can of course can have the opposite effect. Bad stress can cause us to doubt ourselves and others. At some point bad stress can lead to major damage to our health, mood, productivity, relationships, and our overall quality of life.

CAN I ELIMINATE STRESS?

We may feel overwhelmed at times which causes us to become stressed. But remember that we are not wanting to eliminate all stress as some stress can actually be good. The goal for dealing with stress is to learn how to manage it. So learning how to regain control over our thoughts, our emotions, our schedules, our environment, and even the way we deal with problems.

INTERPRETING THE SCORE

0- 10: Below Average - Congratulations, you seem to be handling life's stressors well at the moment.

11- 14: Average - Your life is far from stress-free so now is the time to learn how to reduce your stress to healthier levels.

15- 18: Medium-High - You may not realize how much stress is already affecting your mood, productivity, and relationships.

19+: High - You're experiencing high levels of stress. The higher your score, the more damage stress is doing to your mind, body, and behavior.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Cognitive Symptoms	Physical Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memory problems Inability to concentrate Poor judgment Seeing only the negative Anxious or racing thoughts Constant worrying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aches and pains Diarrhea or constipation Nausea, dizziness Chest pain, rapid heartbeat Loss of sex drive Frequent colds
Emotional Symptoms	Behavioral Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moodiness Irritability or short temper Agitation, inability to relax Feeling overwhelmed Sense of loneliness and isolation Depression or general unhappiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating more or less Sleeping too much or too little Isolating yourself from others Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax Nervous habits (e.g., nail biting, pacing)

QUESTIONNAIRE

In the last month, how often have you:	Never (0)	Almost Never (1)	Some-times (2)	Fairly Often (3)	Very Often (4)
Been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?					
Felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?					
Felt nervous and "stressed"?					
Felt unsure about your ability to handle your personal problems?					
Felt that things weren't going your way?					
Found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?					
Been unable to control irritations in your life?					
Felt that you weren't on top of things?					
Been angered because of things that were outside of your control?					
Felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?					

Score: _____

*This questionnaire is not intended to replace professional diagnosis.
Adapted from: Perceived Stress Scale – Sheldon Cohen*