



MacEwan University Health Centre:

Mental Health 101:



Information, self-help
resources, tools &
strategies.

Stress Management:



What is stress?

Stress can be part of our daily lives and also connected with main occasions, such as caring for children and families, work places, financial, or planning vacations. With these daily and major life events, comes good stress and too much stress. When we have stress that is continuously affecting us, it can then impact our mind, body, and health. Such as:

- Mobilizing Energy
- Your body releases adrenaline, your heart beats faster and you start to breathe more quickly. Both good and bad events can trigger this reaction.
- Consuming Energy Stores
- If you remain in the mobilizing energy stage for a period of time, your body begins to release stored sugars and fats. You will then feel driven, pressured and tired. You may drink more coffee, smoke more and drink more alcohol. You may also experience anxiety, negative thinking or memory loss, catch a cold or get the flu more often than normal.
- Draining Energy Stores
- If you do not resolve your stress problem, your body's need for energy will become greater than its ability to provide it. At this stage, you may experience insomnia, errors in judgment and personality changes. You may also develop a serious illness such as heart disease or be at risk of mental illness.

Stress helps our bodies prepare for fight or flight modes. If we are draining our energy stores for too long due to high stress, it can result in long-term health problems.

Managing stress

Some methods of coping with stress are to ensure we are engaging in self-care are:

- **Identify the minor incidents and major events that are causing you stress.** Do self-reflection on what these problems are and if they are concealing any deeper difficulties.
- **Change your thinking.** Stress can cause negative thinking which can make us feel that solutions are not attainable for our situations. To change this, it is important to be realistic and focus on what we can and cannot do. Some ways to help change our thinking are:
 - Using a stress diary
- **Using mindfulness and body practices.** These practices can help bring our attention to our present moment and experience the events as they are.
 - Deep breathing
 - Guided imagery: This uses both deep breathing and meditation to relax our bodies and reduce the level of stress we are experiencing.
 - Mindfulness meditation: This provides us the ability to focus and remain on our present, become aware of our
- **Stay active.** Engaging in physical activity allows us to combat stress, improve our mood, health, and well-being. By engaging in physical activity, our endorphins in our brain increase, and allow us to feel more positive and able to manage stress.
- **Consistent sleep schedule.** Ensuring that you are sleeping and getting up at the same time daily can help reduce the effects and amount of stress you experience. Practice mindfulness relaxation before bed. Do not use electronics before sleeping and only use your bed for sleep.

Anxiety Management:



What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a mental and physical reaction to perceived threats. Anxiety can be helpful, but in small doses. Our anxiety can protect us from danger, physical threats and allows us to focus on our concerns. Our anxiety can be overwhelming and or debilitating when it becomes too severe or hard to manage. Some common symptoms of anxiety are:

- Increased heart rate
- Shallow breathing
- Excessive sweating
- Racing thoughts/uncontrollable worry
- Tightness in chest
- Upset stomach

When our bodies are reacting to the anxiety & high amounts of stress it will begin to signal the brain to prepare the body for the fight, flight or freeze response. The blood will rush from our limbs (arms & legs) towards our larger organs in our torso. There are many forms of anxiety such as generalized, phobias, and panic anxieties. Anxiety can be created into a cycle of having a set out 'fear' to then avoiding the fear, to then having temporary relief, which ultimately increases overall anxiety.

Anxiety → Fear → Temporary Relief → Increased Anxiety

Managing anxiety

Managing anxiety can be overwhelming when you don't know where to begin. There are many tools, strategies and techniques that can be used to manage overall anxiety. Listed below our steps that you can take to begin your self management of anxiety.

Connect with your physician:

- Seeking support from your physician will be a great first step to access any further information on what would be best for your care
- Your physician will be able to connect with any further supports you may need such as in clinic supports to a mental health professional, and or someone within your community
- Your physician will be able to discuss if medications will be supportive to you and your mental health

Self-reflect:

- Ask yourself internal questions such as:
When is my anxiety most prevalent?
What do I do in times of feeling heightened anxiety?
Where in my body do I feel my anxiety?
What do I do after my anxiety becomes manageable?

Connection to supports:

- There are many techniques, strategies and tools that we can use to manage our anxiety
- Grounding techniques take 2-5 minutes and can allow for our bodies & brains to be comforted in the present time (Some examples are deep breathing techniques, utilizing our 5 senses, categorizing topics and or surroundings)
- Guided journaling can also be supportive in challenging our anxiety and identifying if it holding any purpose to us
- Involving physical activity into your routine will also be supportive to your symptoms of anxiety
- Working on your sleep routine

Depression Management:



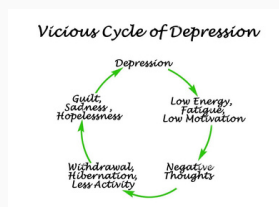
What is depression?

Depression is a disorder that is defined by thoughts, feelings and behaviors. It pertains to having more consistent feelings of anger, hopelessness, guilt, and or sadness. Impacting overall decrease in all realms of behavior changes, such as diet, sleep, and motivation. Leading to poor self-esteem and negative thought patterns.

Depressive symptoms may include and is not limited to:

- limited sleep or increased sleep during the day and night
- Lack of motivation
- Poor diet (eating more than usual or less than usual) - drawn to unhealthy foods
- Limited concentration
- Suicidal thoughts/ideation
- Loss of interest in activities
- Withdrawal from human connection

Once in the cycle of depression it can look difficult on how you will be able to come out of it. Through the negative experiences we face within our lives, and the difficulties that come with it, depression can impact each person in a different way.



Managing Depression

Depression can be seen as something daunting and scary to look at managing alone. There are many ways to start the process of managing depressive symptoms starting with yourself, and if you determine seeking professional support they are available as well.

Identify what has significantly changed in your life that has brought on depressive symptoms:

- How long have you been feeling this way?
- What did it feel like when you were not depressed?
- Any changes to your environment?

Meet yourself where you are at:

- Often when in a depressive state we have limited motivation to do things we once had no concern doing, identifying this can be productive in coming out of the cycle
- Start small, and work your way up with the goals you make - making small incremental changes will slowly create change in your emotional state
- Celebrate your wins (big or small!!)

Self regulation:

- Identifying that you are your own worst enemy and identifying that you are also your biggest supporter to leaving the spiral of depression is important
- Make small goals in reversing the spiral with things such as: exercising, increasing social interaction, playing into hobbies/interests, and challenging yourself to a small degree

Resources:



Videos for Deep Breathing:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wemm-i6Xhr8&t=2>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF_1ZiFta-E
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEmt1Znux58>

Videos for Guided Imagery:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0usP3WDcOw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wq-LQfJl50A>

Videos for Mindfulness Meditation:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CF7gt0ug79Q&t=66s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dchWh-lHQps>

Websites & Apps for Mental Health:

The Government of Canada:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/healthy-living/your-health/lifestyles/your-health-mental-health-coping-stress-health-canada-2008.html>

Anxiety Canada:

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/w-i-n-t-e-r-stress-busting-tips-by-dr-melanie-badali/>

Canadian Cancer Society:

<https://cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/coping-with-changes/your-emotions-and-cancer/coping-with-anxiety-and-stress>

CAMH:

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19/coping-with-stress-and-anxiety>

Mindshift App to download on your phone:

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt/>

Calm App to download to your phone:

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/calm/id571800810>
<https://cmha.ca/>

PCN Mental Wellness 101:

<https://www.eopcn.ca/classes/mental-health-classes/mental-wellness-101/>

CCI:

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Anxiety>

Crisis Supports:

- **Access 24/7:** 780.424.2424
- **Canada Suicide Prevention Helpline:** 1.833.456.4566
- Crisis Services Canada (Distress Line):
- Phone number for the 24/7 distress line: 780.482.4357 (HELP)
- Also have an online chat on weekdays from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM MST and weekends from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM MST (link is <https://webapp.icarol.com/pub/Messaging/StatusBadge.aspx?OrgNum=2183>)
- **Send a text to 45645.** Available from 4:00 PM to Midnight ET. Standard text messaging rates apply
- **Can text HOME to 686868 to speak to a trained Crisis Provider.** Available in Canada.
- **Go to your nearest emergency department**

Get In Touch

Contact Information



Mental Health Team

780-784-6707



Our Location

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