

Managing Stress

Why It Matters



Recovery is more than just overcoming substance use—it's about building a healthier, more balanced life. **Stress is a normal part of everyday life, but when left unmanaged, it can become overwhelming and increase the risk of relapse.** Learning how to effectively manage stress helps improve emotional well-being, strengthen decision-making and support long-term recovery. By developing healthy coping strategies, you can reduce the negative impact of stress and create a solid foundation for lasting change.

Five Quick Tips: Managing Stress

- 1 Breathe Deeply
- 2 Move Daily
- 3 Stay Connected
- 4 Create Routine
- 5 Pause Mindfully

The Effects of Stress on Recovery

- 1 **Increases Cravings and Triggers**
Stress can lead to cravings as the brain seeks quick relief. Without proper coping skills, high-stress situations may trigger a relapse.
- 2 **Impacts Mental and Emotional Health**
Chronic stress can contribute to anxiety, depression and irritability, making it harder to stay committed to recovery.
- 3 **Affects Physical Health**
Stress takes a toll on the body, leading to issues like headaches, fatigue, digestive problems and weakened immunity, all of which can make recovery more difficult.
- 4 **Impairs Decision-Making**
High levels of stress can make it harder to think clearly and make positive choices, increasing the chance of impulsive decisions and risk-taking behaviors.



To get help for you or a loved one, call:

844-535-7291



Or visit:

[BHGrecovery.com](https://bhgrecovery.com)



Healthy Ways to Manage Stress

1

Practice Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques

Deep breathing exercises can help reduce tension and calm your nervous system.

Meditation and mindfulness practices can help you stay present and manage emotions more effectively.

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR), a technique of tensing and releasing muscle groups, can ease physical stress and promote relaxation.

2

Exercise Regularly

Physical activity releases endorphins, which improves mood and reduces stress.

Even simple activities like **walking**, stretching, or yoga can help relieve stress.

Aim for at least **30 minutes of movement** per day to support both physical and mental well-being.

3

Maintain a Healthy Routine

Stick to a **consistent sleep** schedule to allow your body and mind to recover.

Eat a balanced **diet** to fuel your body with the nutrients it needs.

Establish a structured daily routine to provide stability and reduce uncertainty.

4

Build a Support System

Stay connected with supportive friends, family, or recovery groups.

Consider **therapy or counseling** to learn additional coping strategies.

Reach out when you need help—recovery is not a journey you have to take alone.

5

Engage in Healthy Distractions

Find **hobbies and activities** that bring you joy, such as reading, music, or creative arts.

Journaling can help process emotions and gain perspective on stressful situations.

Spending time in **nature** has been shown to lower stress and improve mental health.

What to Avoid



Ignoring Stress:

Suppressing stress can make it worse over time. When you acknowledge it, you can take steps to manage it.



Unhealthy Coping

Mechanisms: Avoid turning to caffeine, junk food, or social isolation as a way to cope.



Overloading Yourself:

Learn to set boundaries and say no to overwhelming commitments.

Conclusion: Stress Management for a Stronger Recovery

Managing stress is a critical part of maintaining long-term recovery. By building healthy coping mechanisms, staying connected with support systems and prioritizing self-care, **you can navigate stressful situations without jeopardizing your progress.** Remember, stress is inevitable—but how you respond to it can make all the difference. Take control of your stress, and take control of your recovery journey ■

