



Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

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The Healthy Journey

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Simple Steps to Manage Stress

by Allison Udris

Stress happens to all of us! When you are faced with a challenge, it is normal to experience feelings of stress. Many life events can cause stress, such as job loss, divorce, caregiving, and financial responsibilities. However, feeling stressed over a long period of time can negatively affect your physical and mental health. For example, you may notice changes in your appetite, forgetfulness, headaches, difficulty sleeping, irritability, constant worrying, or a lack of energy during times of stress. Next time you are feeling stressed, try these simple ways to manage your symptoms.

Exercise. You don't need to belong to a gym to maintain an active lifestyle. You can do simple stretches or yoga poses in the comfort of your own home. If you like watching TV, try to exercise during commercials by doing stretches or squats. If you like being outside, taking a walk is a wonderful way to exercise and relieve stress. Exercise releases endorphins in the brain, which are chemicals in your body that naturally uplift your mood.

Consider a positive outlook. Did you know that simply the act of smiling creates a feeling of happiness? Just the physical expression of smiling sends signals to your brain that create a positive emotional response. Another way to beat stress and feel inspired throughout the day is to surround yourself with uplifting messages or words of encouragement. Try to display a favorite



quote, prayer, or picture on your refrigerator, mirror, or phone/computer background. Place it somewhere you will see it many times throughout the day.

Try relaxation strategies. One way to relax is through meditation. New to meditation? Don't worry. There are meditation apps available to download on your phone that will guide you through a meditation practice. Also, you can use an alarm clock or kitchen timer for a meditation practice. Set a timer for 5 minutes, and sit in a comfortable position with a straight back. Close your eyes. Notice your thoughts, but do not judge them. If your mind is wandering, simply focus on your breath. Enjoy your quiet time. Once the timer rings, you can open your eyes and end your meditation practice. Other relaxation techniques include deep breathing, listening to music, and writing in a journal.



Recognize the importance of sleep. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 3 American adults is not getting enough sleep. Lack of sleep is associated with various health risks, but is also associated with higher levels of stress. Aim to sleep

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about 8 hours per night, if possible. Being well-rested allows you to cope with problems more effectively when they arise. There are many routines that can improve your sleep quality, such as setting a regular bedtime and removing distractions like computers/phones from your bedroom when it's time to sleep. Also, drinking



too much caffeine or alcohol can interfere with a good night's sleep. If you regularly have trouble sleeping, you may benefit from talking to a doctor who can determine if a health condition is affecting your sleep quality.

Maintain a healthy diet. Think of healthy food as fuel that gives your body energy to function properly during times of stress. You want to feed your body with fresh, quality foods like fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy sources of protein (e.g., beans, eggs, lean meats). Drinking a warm cup of tea can also have a calming effect during times of stress. Herbal teas are a great option because they are caffeine-free. Caffeine can excite your nervous system during times of stress, and can worsen symptoms of anxiety.



Sometimes, if your stressors pile up and become unmanageable, you may need extra help. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness – it is actually a sign of self-care. Your health is important! Consider talking to a doctor or a counselor for additional support. If you do not have a doctor or counselor and would like one, HANDLS staff members can assist you by providing referral information for practitioners in your area.

Meet Linda Allibalogun

Meet one of the newest HANDLS team members, Linda Allibalogun.

Linda, who is a nurse practitioner, works on the Medical Research Vehicles (MRVs) completing physical examinations and providing health education and medical referral information to our participants.



Linda worked as a nephrology nurse for seven years before coming to HANDLS. She is currently studying to obtain her doctorate in nursing at Walden University.

A proud mother of two daughters with a third on the way, Linda doesn't have much down time. When she does find time for herself, she enjoys reading health articles, dancing and spending time with her husband and children.

Did you miss your last appointment?

We are currently scheduling participants from these neighborhoods listed who have not had their second or third follow-up visit to the medical research vehicles:

- South Baltimore
- Cherry Hill
- Reservoir Hill
- Forest Park
- Morrell Park
- Curtis Bay
- Park Heights
- Pimlico
- South Hilton

To be scheduled you MUST already be a HANDLS participant and have a picture ID.

Please call 410-558-8029 to schedule your next appointment.

Stay Hydrated During Summer Heat

By Erica Adams RD, Megan Grimes RD, Samantha Reilly

Hydration is important every day of the year, but staying properly hydrated becomes even more important as warm weather approaches. Do you wonder what health care providers mean when they talk about hydration? Every day, we breathe, sweat, and go to the bathroom, releasing water and fluids from our body. Hydration means having a healthy balance of water in your body that allows it to work properly. During the warm months we are outside more often and may sweat more than usual. As a result, people may become dehydrated while consuming their usual amounts of food and liquids. Dehydration is a condition defined by not having enough water or fluids in your body to maintain a healthy state. It is important that as we lose fluids, we also replace them by drinking and eating foods with a high amount of water such as watermelon or lettuce. The good news is that water is the most often consumed beverage by HANDLS participants.

Whether you are a person who works out often or someone who likes to spend summer days walking in the park, gardening, or working outside, hydration can affect performance. Without enough fluids, muscles can cramp and you can become dizzy and tired or develop headaches. Your body also needs enough fluids to sweat, which is the body's natural way of cooling itself down.

Quick way of checking if you are hydrated: When you are properly hydrated your urine is colorless or light yellow. When you are dehydrated your urine is dark yellow.

Here are some tips to help you keep your body hydrated:

Drink plenty of water. Aim for at least 40 oz (or 5 cups) per day!

Don't wait until you are thirsty to start drinking water. Planning a day long activity outside? Here is a trick. Fill two water bottles and place one bottle in the freezer



overnight. Bring both with you, so once you finish the first bottle, the second will be melted and you will have cold water!

Eat fresh fruits and vegetables. These foods have high water content and can add fluids to your body. Cucumbers, tomatoes, oranges, and spinach are high in water.

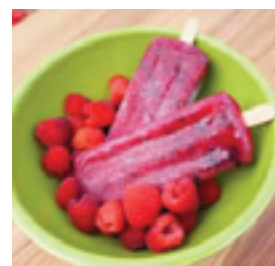


Avoid sugary drinks. Research shows that drinking sugary drinks, like soda or sweet tea could make us want to eat more throughout the day. Avoid sweetened beverages like soda. Not only do they lack important nutrients, but they also contribute unneeded calories – almost 200 calories per day on average! Drinking water and eating more fruits and vegetables in place of sugary drinks can help you save calories.

Love drinking soda? Avoiding just one can of soda a day with water can save you up to 140 calories and 8 spoons of sugar!

Bored with water? Try adding lemons, limes, cucumbers, berries or some fresh mint to your water to jazz it up a little! Add a zero calorie flavoring packet to your water.

Have a sweet treat on a hot day. 100% fruit juice popsicles or bars can be refreshing and add to your fluid intake while also satisfying your sweet tooth!



Avoid alcohol intake. Alcohol is a diuretic, which means it makes you go to the bathroom more frequently. More frequent urination means you are losing fluids.



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The Quarterly Newsletter for the HANDLS Community Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

The purpose of this study is to learn about changes in health over time. Using our medical research vehicles, we want to study as many people with different backgrounds as we can. We want this study to help us understand healthy aging by examining the effects of different backgrounds on changes in health over time. The information that we gather will help improve health and prevent disabilities. We want to do this for people from all backgrounds, particularly those in poor and minority communities.

**For information about our study call 1-877-677-9538
or visit our website *hands.nih.gov***

