

# Exercise and stress: Get moving to manage stress

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Exercise in almost any form can act as a stress reliever. Being active can boost your feel-good endorphins and distract you from daily worries.

You know that exercise does your body good, but you're too busy and stressed to fit it into your routine. Hold on a second—there's good news when it comes to exercise and [stress](#).

Virtually any form of exercise, from aerobics to yoga, can act as a stress reliever. If you're not an athlete or even if you're out of shape, you can still make a [little exercise](#) go a long way toward stress management. Discover the connection between exercise and stress relief—and why exercise should be part of your stress management plan.

Exercise increases your overall health and your sense of well-being, which puts more pep in your step every day. But exercise also has some direct stress-busting benefits.

It pumps up your endorphins. Physical activity helps bump up the production of your brain's feel-good neurotransmitters, called endorphins.

Although this function is often referred to as a runner's high, a rousing game of tennis or a nature hike also can contribute to this same feeling.

It's meditation in motion. After a fast-paced game of racquetball or several laps in the pool, you'll often find that you've forgotten the day's irritations and concentrated only on your body's movements.

As you begin to regularly shed your daily tensions through movement and [physical activity](#), you may find that this focus on a single task, and the resulting energy and optimism, can help you remain calm and clear in everything you do.

It improves your mood. Regular exercise can increase [self-confidence](#), it can relax you, and it can lower the symptoms associated with mild depression and anxiety. Exercise can also improve your sleep, which is often disrupted by stress, depression and anxiety. All of these [exercise](#) benefits can ease your stress levels and give you a sense of command over your body and your life.

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