

Dealing With Stress, Anxiety, and Depression

Stress, anxiety, and depression can get in the way of your health. If coping becomes difficult, VA is here to help. Talk with your primary care provider.

Here are some self-management coping tips:

Change Your Thinking

- Your mood (sad, nervous, stressed, etc.) comes from your thoughts and what you tell yourself. In most cases, you can control your mood by choosing what you think about and what you tell yourself.
- When you are feeling too much stress, be aware of what you are thinking. Are these thoughts making you feel worse? If so, then replace them with more positive thoughts. Make a list of positive statements about yourself that you can use when feeling stressed. Here are some examples:
 - I am a good person.
 - I am calm and relaxed.
 - I am at peace with myself and with the world around me.
 - I can control my reaction to a situation, even if I can't control the situation.
 - I will accept the things I cannot change. I will have the courage to change the things I can, and I will learn to know the difference.



Help Your Body Handle Stress

- Your mood affects your body, and vice versa...
Taking care of your body will improve your outlook.

Be Active

- Make physical activity a part of every day.
- Listen to or make music, paint, or express yourself artistically.
- Take the time to do things you enjoy!

Eat Wisely

- Eat a healthy diet high in vegetables and fruits.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid managing your mood with unhealthy foods or overeating.



Reduce your Stress

- Get enough rest.
- Try a massage.
- Take a long shower or bath.
- Take a break from stressful situations: count to 10, take a deep breath, or take a few minutes to daydream about a favorite memory.
- Divide big tasks into little ones, and tackle one at a time.
Plan ahead so you don't feel rushed.
- Learn how to relax and practice this regularly.
Relaxation training is available through the VA.
- Arrange to have some quiet time for yourself each day.
- Talk over your troubles with someone you trust.

