

# Strategies for Coping with Stress

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- Practice relaxation exercises (abdominal breathing and muscle relaxation)
- Break a big task into smaller, more manageable tasks
- Take a break for a few minutes to decompress (take a walk; talk/text a friend; draw/write; play with a pet); but don't procrastinate and/or avoid it
- Exercise and make healthy food choices
- Avoid excess caffeine intake which can increase feelings of anxiety and agitation
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs that can be unhealthy and impair your judgment
- Plan ahead when possible and prevent last minute assignments from creeping up; work with friends when you can, brainstorm and share ideas
- Try not to over schedule and give yourself too many things to get done on a given day
- Set high, but realistic goals instead of trying to be perfect
- Be aware of negative, defeating self-statements that can contribute to your feeling helpless and hopeless
- Reach out and talk to a friend, family member or perhaps teacher/guidance counselor to help get your worries off of your mind so you can be productive and accomplish
- Get sufficient sleep to prevent deprivation that can increase impulsive behavior
- Seek out professional support from a therapist or counselor who can help you sort through the difficulties you might be having.