



The Delaware Office of
WOMEN'S HEALTH

Tips for reducing stress in the moment and in your life.

We all have stress — at work, at home, and on the road. Sometimes we can feel especially stressed because of a bad interaction with someone, too much work, or everyday hassles like getting stuck in traffic. Negative stress can keep you from feeling and performing your best — mentally, physically and emotionally. But no one’s life is completely stress-free. It is best to have a plan for the next time someone pushes your buttons, or a situation is putting undue pressure on you. Try these three simple techniques for dealing with it.

Positive Self-Talk: Let’s be honest, we all talk to ourselves! Sometimes we talk out loud but usually we do it in our heads. Self-talk can be positive or negative. Negative self-talk increases stress. Positive self-talk can help you calm down and control stress. With practice, you can learn to shift negative thoughts to positive ones. For example:

Change the negative	Into a positive
“I can't do this.”	“I'll do the best I can.” Or “I’ve got this.”
“Everything is going wrong.”	“I can handle this if I take one step at a time.”
“I hate it when this happens.”	“I know how to deal with this; I've done it before.”
“I feel helpless and alone.”	“I can reach out and get help if I need it.”
“I can’t believe I screwed up.	“I'm human, and we all make mistakes. I can fix this.”

Top Emergency Stress-Stoppers: Here are actions to help you defuse stress in the moment. You may need different stress stoppers for different situations, or a combination.

- Count to 10 before you speak or react.
- Take a few slow, deep breaths until you feel your body unclench a bit.
- Got for a walk, even if it’s just to the restroom. It can help break the tension and give you a chance to think things through.
- Try a quick meditation or prayer to get some perspective.
- If it’s not urgent, sleep on it and respond tomorrow. This works especially well for stressful emails and social media trolls.
- Walk away if you can for a while, handle it later once things have calmed down.
- Break down big problems into smaller parts. Take one step at a time instead of trying to tackle everything at once.
- Chill out with music or an inspirational podcast to help you rage less on the road.
- Take a break to pet a dog, hug a loved one or help someone out.
- Work out or do something active. Exercise is one of the best antidotes for stress.



Stress-Busting Activities

Doing things you enjoy is a natural way to relieve stress and find your happy place. Even when you're down, you may find pleasure in simple things like going for a walk, catching up with a friend, or reading a good book. When stress makes you feel bad, do something that makes you feel good, even if only for 10 or 15 minutes. Some of these activities may work for you:

- Make art -- draw, color, paint, or play a musical instrument.
- Work on a scrapbook or photo album to focus on good memories.
- Read a book, short story or magazine.
- Meet a friend for coffee or a meal.
- Play a favorite sport like golf, tennis, or basketball.
- Do a hobby like sewing, knitting, or making jewelry.
- Play with your kids or pets – outdoors if possible.
- Listen to music or watch an inspiring performance.
- Spend time outdoors enjoying nature.
- Take a relaxing bath and feel the stress wash away.
- Meditate or practice yoga.
- Work in the garden or do a home improvement project.
- Go for a run or bike ride to clear your head.

The key is to find your groove and make it a practice. You'll be amazed at how quickly you may start to feel better once you disrupt the cycle of stress.

If you are unable to relieve your stress and you feel it is overwhelming, it is important you talk to a health care professional and seek help. Women are frequently the family caretakers and are concerned with taking care of everyone else. Make sure you're paying attention to your own health, especially your mental health.

Get the latest information at <https://www.healthydelaware.org/> or read more on stress at www.womenshealth.gov.