



Mosaic Counseling
Employee Assistance Program

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MOSAIC MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

THE OFFICIAL EAP NEWSLETTER FROM MOSAIC COUNSELING

APRIL IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Stress is a natural and inevitable part of life, often described as the body's response to any demand or challenge. It can manifest in various forms, ranging from acute stress, which is short-term, to chronic stress, which persists over a longer period. Identifying and managing stress effectively is crucial for maintaining both mental and physical well-being.



Identifying Stress

Recognizing the signs of stress is the first step towards managing it. Symptoms can be physical, emotional, or behavioral. Physically, stress may present as headaches, fatigue, muscle tension, or changes in sleep patterns. Emotionally, individuals may experience anxiety, irritability, or depression. Behaviorally, stress might lead to changes in appetite, social withdrawal, or reliance on substances like alcohol or drugs. According to the American Psychological Association, stress can also impact cognitive function, leading to forgetfulness or a lack of concentration (American Psychological Association, 2021).

How can I manage my stress?

Effective stress management involves a combination of strategies tailored to an individual's lifestyle and preferences. Here are some evidence-based approaches:

1

Exercise: Regular physical activity is known to reduce stress levels by releasing endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* highlights that exercise can be as effective as medication for reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression (Blumenthal et al., 2007).



2

Mindfulness and Meditation: Practices such as mindfulness meditation can help individuals focus on the present moment, reducing stress and promoting relaxation. Research published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* found that mindfulness meditation programs significantly improved anxiety, depression, and pain.



3

Time Management: Learning to prioritize tasks and delegate responsibilities can reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed. The use of planners or digital tools can help organize daily activities more efficiently.



4

Social Support: Connecting with friends, family, or support groups can provide emotional comfort and practical help. Social interactions offer an opportunity to share feelings and experiences, which can alleviate stress.



5

Healthy Lifestyle Choices: Maintaining a balanced diet, getting adequate sleep, and avoiding excessive caffeine and alcohol can bolster the body's resilience to stress.



6

Professional Help: If stress becomes unmanageable, seeking help from a mental health professional can be beneficial. Therapists can provide strategies such as cognitive-behavioral therapy to tackle stress-related issues effectively.



At the end of the day, stress is a common aspect of our lives and understanding how to identify and manage can significantly improve one's quality of life. Your EAP will connect you with a mental health professional and after identifying what contributes to our own stress, adopt a combination of lifestyle changes and seeking support when necessary, individuals can navigate stress more effectively, leading to a healthier and more balanced life. 🌈

References

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