

PantryPress

Stress Awareness Month

April is Stress Awareness Month. It is important to understand how stress affects your physical and mental health and encourage open conversation about stress to reduce stigma. Keep reading to find out new stress management techniques and take a moment to reflect. The goal is to raise awareness and provide support to individuals coping with stress to improve overall well-being.

Importance of Understanding Stress

Stress is a common issue that can affect people of all ages and backgrounds. The amount of stress you have can affect your body, thoughts, feelings, and even your behavior. For example, stress may contribute to poor health behaviors such as smoking, overeating, lack of physical activity, unhealthy diet, and medication abuse. Stress that is left unmanaged can lead to other health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes.

To help manage stress, it is important to recognize the common symptoms.

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping
- Increased heart rate
- Digestive Problems
- Forgetfulness
- Increased substance use
- Skin Problems
- Withdrawal from social activities
- Weakened immune system
- Sweating

10 Ways to Reduce Stress

1. **Move your body:** whether you go for a walk or jam out to your favorite song, getting your blood pumping has shown to provide stress relief.
2. **Take a moment:** try a breathing exercise to reconnect the mind and body or take a moment to be still.
3. **Spend time outside:** getting outside while the sun is still shining can improve your mood and the fresh air might allow you to breathe a little deeper.
4. **Make time for hobbies:** set time aside in your busy day to do something you enjoy, just for fun!
5. **Connect with others:** meet up with an old friend or call a relative you haven't spoken to in a while. Feeling connected can help reduce stress levels.
6. **Get enough sleep:** poor sleep can add to your stress levels, be sure that you stay consistent with your sleeping routine so that you don't miss any sleep that your body needs.
7. **Take breaks:** show yourself some grace. Stressors will pop up in your life every single day, it is how you manage that stress that will influence your overall health.
8. **Eat a balanced diet:** eating food from all colors of the rainbow will help give your body the nourishment it needs.
9. **Write it down:** putting thoughts and feelings on paper can help make things seem less overwhelming. Grab a sheet of paper and write down anything that comes to mind, this is called a "brain dump".
10. **Have a laugh:** laughter has shown to help the body relax. The next time you feel stressed out, watch a funny video or tell a joke to a friend and share the smiles.



Stress Free Salmon Salad

Serves:4

Ingredients

- 1 can (14oz) salmon, rinsed and drained
- 1 celery stick, diced
- 2 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp dill
- 1 tsp mustard

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients into a small bowl.
2. Stir and chill for 30 minutes before serving.
3. Spread salmon on whole grain crackers or whole wheat bread.

Nutrition Info

158 Calories
7g Fat
1g Carbohydrates
23g Protein
449mg Sodium

Related Links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/living-with/index.html>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>

