

Module 9: Manage Stress

Participant Guide



Session Focus



Managing stress can help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

In this session, we will talk about:

- Some causes of stress
- The link between stress and type 2 diabetes
- Some ways to reduce stress
- Some healthy ways to manage stress

You will also make a new action plan!

Tips:

- ✓ Know what situations make you feel stressed. Plan how to manage them.
- ✓ Learn how to say “no” to things you don’t really want or need to do.

Causes of Stress

Barbara's Story—Part 1

Barbara is a single mom who feels pulled in all directions. Her children are still in school, and her father is in poor health. Plus, Barbara works full time.

Barbara's doctor tells her she's at risk for type 2 diabetes. He urges her to lose weight by eating well and getting active.



Carlos's Story—Part 1

Carlos has a difficult time feeling like he can stay on top of all the things that need to be done, like paying bills, finishing jobs on time, and making time for his family.

Carlos's partner keeps saying he should eat better and get some exercise, which he knows to be true since learning he is at risk for type 2 diabetes. Just the thought of trying to make changes seems unreasonable to Carlos with everything else going on.

List two things that cause you stress.

1. _____
2. _____

Stress and Type 2 Diabetes

There is a link between stress and type 2 diabetes.

- Stress can **cause changes in your blood sugar levels, which increases your risk of getting type 2 diabetes.**
- Stress can **cause you to act in unhealthy ways.**

Barbara's and Carlos's Stories—Part 2

After a full day at work, which has its own stress, Barbara has to sit down and help her children with their homework. It's not easy, and it requires a lot of patience and attention. Plus, Barbara still needs to cook dinner. When dinner is cleaned up and the kids are in bed, Barbara sits on the couch and eats ice cream or has a second glass of wine.



Carlos is so tired after a day at work that he just sits on the couch after dinner and watches TV. He ends up staying up too late and skipping his exercise routine again.

Stress and Type 2 Diabetes

When you feel stressed, you may feel:

- Angry
- Annoyed
- Anxious
- Confused
- Hungry
- Impatient
- Sad
- Worried

You may also have:

- An aching head, back, or neck
- A racing heartbeat
- Tight muscles
- An upset stomach

When you feel stressed, you may:

- Drink too much alcohol
- Forget things
- Put off doing the things you need to do
- Rush around without getting much done
- Sleep too little, too much, or both
- Smoke
- Take too much medicine
- Work too much

You may also:

- Make unhealthy choices about eating or drinking
- Not feel up to being physically active
- Spend too much time watching TV or videos or using the computer

Ways To Reduce Stress



There's no surefire way to prevent stress. But there are ways to make your life less stressful.

Try these tips.

- **Ask for help.** Feel free to ask your friends and family for help. They care about you and want the best for you. And you can help them another time.
- **Be tidy.** Keep your things in order.
- **Get enough sleep.** Try for 8 hours per night.
- **Have fun!** Make time to do something you enjoy and makes you feel happy. Go for a walk with a friend, read a book, or watch a video.
- **Just say “no.”** Learn how to say no to things you don't really want or need to do.
- **Know yourself.** Know what situations make you feel stressed. Plan how to manage them.
- **Make a to-do list.** Put the most important things at the top of the list.
- **Remind yourself.** Use notes, calendars, timers — whatever works for you.
- **Take small steps.** Start new supportive routines that help you avoid or reduce stress.
- **Solve problems.** When you have a problem, try to solve it promptly. Then it's less likely to become a source of stress in your life.
- **Take care of your body and mind.** That way, you'll be more prepared to tackle stressful situations.

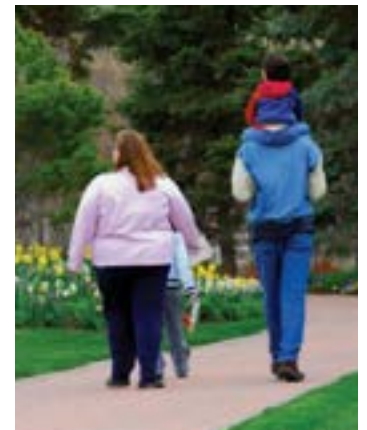


Healthy Ways To Manage Stress



Feeling stressed? Try these healthy ways to manage stress.

- **Count to 20 in your head.** This can give your brain a needed break.
- **Soothe yourself.** Get a massage, take a hot bath, have a cup of herbal tea, or put on some calming music.
- **Give yourself a pep talk.** Say something encouraging, like: “There’s no rush. I can take my time.”
- **Try some ways to relax.** See the “Ways To Relax” box for some ideas.
- **Stretch.** Do yoga or other stretching exercises.
- **Take a breather.** If you can, take a break from whatever is making you feel stressed.
- **Talk about your feelings.** Tell a friend or counselor how you feel.
- **Cut back on caffeine.** Caffeine can make you feel jumpy and anxious.
- **Get moving!** Do something active—even if it’s just a walk around the block.
- **Do something fun.** Dance, hike, be social. Do whatever you enjoy—as long as it’s healthy.
- **Look at the situation in a different way.** Things may not be as bad as they seem to be.



Healthy Ways To Manage Stress

Ways To Relax:

Make relaxation routine. Try to practice for at least 10 minutes a day. It may take time to see results, so be patient. Listen to calming music if you wish.

At first, it may be easier to relax if you lie down in a dark, quiet room. But in time, you'll be able to relax anytime, anywhere.

Relax your muscles. Scrunch up your face muscles. Hold for 5 seconds. Now release. Feel your face muscles relax. Do the same with your jaw, shoulder, arm, chest, leg, and foot muscles in turn.

Meditate. Focus on something simple that you find calming. It could be an image or a sound. Don't worry if other thoughts get in the way. Just go back to your image or sound.

Imagine. Imagine a scene that makes you feel peaceful. Try to picture yourself there.

Breathe deeply. Relax your stomach muscles. Place one hand just below your ribs. Take a slow, deep breath through your nose. Feel your hand go up.

Now breathe out slowly through your mouth. Make sure to breathe out all the way. Feel your hand go down.

