

WellCats: Healthy Habits to Slash Stress

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Now more than ever, stress levels are soaring. In the wake of what is going on in the world, it is imperative that we use health tactics to combat stress. The *WellCats* team is here for you as we are sharing our top three tips that you can implement today for how to reduce stress including: create a morning routine, move every day, and nourish your mind and body! Take a deep breath...you got this!

Physical activity increases the production of endorphins in the body which are also known as the “feel good,” hormones. As a result, we feel less anxious and stressed, our mood is improved, and we get better sleep, further reducing stress.

Just as we create fitness routines, we must create routines for our mental health. Routines provide for normalcy in our lives which creates a calming effect. Indumathi Bendi, MD, says that having routine in your life reduces stress by making the situation seem more “controllable and predictable.” Morning routines allow you to slow down from your busy life and set a positive tone for the day. Now more than ever, do your best to establish and follow a morning routine.

Our final tip? Grab a cookbook or look up a recipe online and try a new dish! Not only will cooking distract you from the stress and anxiety that you may be experiencing, but certain foods have been proven to reduce stress including dark chocolate (rich in antioxidants), whole and unrefined grains (increase levels of serotonin), avocados (high in omega-3s), fatty fish (high in omega-3s), nuts and seeds (high in magnesium), citrus fruits (high in vitamin C), and dark leafy greens (high in fiber). These foods contain different vitamins and nutrients that work together with your body’s natural chemistry to produce stress lowering effects. For example, nuts are full of B vitamins and magnesium which have both been linked to reducing stress and anxiety.

Below you can find a list of ideas for how you can put these health habits into action!

1. Create a Morning Routine

- Create a gratitude list
- Plan out your day
- Breathe or meditate
- Make your bed
- Get some sunlight
- Drink water (try adding some natural flavor with lemon or cucumber!)

2. Movement

- Walk your dog
- Join a *WellCats* virtual class during your lunch break
- Find a fun at home workout that requires no equipment!
- Every hour that you are working, get up and take a lap or do some jumping jacks or pushups at your kitchen counter

3. Nourish

- Cook at home with a loved one
- Try a new recipe every week and share your favorites with a friend!
- Eat plenty of fruits and veggies
- Sip a warm cup of herbal tea for its calming effects
- Avoid processed and sugar loaded foods



Sources:

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