

How to manage stress through resilience

In simple terms, stress is a physical and/or psychological response to a particular problem or situation. Resilience is the ability to cope with it.



Identify the source — what is it that causes your stress?

It may be an obvious thing like a divorce, trouble at work, or financial difficulties. However, your own thoughts, feelings and reactions to the situation may also be a contributing factor.



Stress is an unavoidable part of modern life. If left unchecked, stress can limit your ability to truly enjoy life.

However you don't need to live with crippling stress. If you build your resilience and learn effective stress management techniques, you can face the pressures of life with confidence, optimism and control.



Get some “me” time

It's easy to get so caught up in a busy lifestyle that you forget to take care of your own needs. Look at a little fun and relaxation as a necessity, not a luxury.



Make contact

Regular contact with trusted friends, family or workmates is a natural stress reliever that can counteract the body's “fight or flight” response to stressful situations.

Practice the 4 A's of stress management

Avoid unnecessary stress

A surprising number of stressors in your life can be easily eliminated.

Alter the situation

If a situation can't be avoided, perhaps it can be altered somewhat to make it less stressful.

Adapt to the stressor

If you can't alter the situation, perhaps it's time to change your expectations or attitude.

Accept what you can't change

If you can't avoid, alter or adapt to a situation, sometimes acceptance is the most logical approach.

Get physical

Physical activity can be a major stress reliever. The endorphins released by exercise may improve your mood, and the activity itself may act as a distraction from your concerns.

Manage your time better

Poor time management can be a major cause of stress. Don't over-commit yourself. Prioritise your daily tasks, and break the larger projects into smaller, more manageable steps.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle

Taking good care of yourself is vital to effective stress management. Make sure you eat well, reduce your caffeine and sugar intake, avoid cigarettes, alcohol and drugs, and get plenty of sleep.

Relieve stress in the moment

Sometimes, you find yourself in situations where you need a burst of instant stress relief. The fastest way to reduce stress is by taking a deep breath and a slow exhale.

While a small amount of stress can almost be considered an incentive or a catalyst that helps you overcome a problem, too much stress can negatively impact both your physical and emotional well-being. It can make it difficult to properly function in your daily life.



There are a variety of resources available to yourself and loved ones at [optumwellbeing.com](https://www.optumwellbeing.com)

Our Critical Support Center offers emotional support resources and information when you need it most. Find a variety of topic areas including mental health, traumatic events, natural disasters, grief and loss, supporting adolescents in crisis, and more.



Why do certain individuals seem better able to cope with stressful times than others?

The more resilient you are, the better you may be able to cope with setbacks, function in difficult situations and tolerate the stress and anxiety that sometimes accompany daily life.

Every time you survive a hardship, overcome an obstacle or cope with a challenge, you are building your resilience. Not only will building resilience help you to cope with stress, it also has many other potential benefits. It can also help you to:

- Stay focused and productive
- Feel less afraid of new experiences
- Manage and tolerate strong emotions outside your comfort zone
- Strengthen your relationships and improve your communication skills, even in pressure situations
- Improve your self-esteem
- Be confident you'll eventually find a solution to a problem, even when one isn't immediately apparent



Critical support when you need it

Visit optumwellbeing.com for additional critical support resources and information.



To access specific benefits information

visit [Liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) and log in with your HealthSafeID or company access code:



Call for support at

Your Optum benefit offers support from specially trained, mental health specialists to help anyone who is overwhelmed, depressed, or searching for answers.



This program should not be used for emergency or urgent care needs. In an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. This program is not a substitute for a doctor's or professional's care. Consult with your clinician for specific health care needs, treatment or medication. Due to the potential for a conflict of interest, legal consultation will not be provided on issues that may involve legal action against Optum or its affiliates, or any entity through which the caller is receiving these services directly or indirectly (e.g., employer or health plan). This program and its components may not be available in all states or for all group sizes and is subject to change. Coverage exclusions and limitations may apply.