

Coping With Stress Without Smoking



Stress is a normal part of life. In moderation it can help you reach your goals, but too much stress creates problems. Managing stress is a key part of quitting smoking.



Relax: Our bodies respond to stress by releasing hormones that increase our heart rate and raise our blood pressure. Practicing relaxation techniques, like the ones listed below, may improve your health and help manage your stress in positive ways.

- **Breathe:** Take a few slow, deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. You will feel your body start to relax.
- **Locate Your Stress:** Take a minute to figure out how stress affects your body. Where do you feel tension in your body? A massage, a warm bath, or stretching can help you release built-up tension.
- **Visualize:** Think of a place where you feel safe, comfortable, and relaxed. Picture it as clearly as you can, including what you would feel, hear, and smell if you were in that relaxing place. Allow yourself to enjoy being there for a few minutes.



Exercise: Being active sends out natural chemicals that can elevate your mood and lower your stress. Sometimes a short walk is all it takes!



Talk: You don't have to deal with stress alone. Share your feelings with friends, family, and important people in your life who are able to support you staying smoke free.

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Focus: Life can be overwhelming sometimes. Try not to get caught up in worrying about what's next. Instead, try to focus on what is happening in the present and not what you might have to deal with in the future.



Care: Make an extra effort to take care of yourself. This includes basic things such as eating a balanced diet, drinking lots of water, and getting enough sleep.



Do Good: Doing something nice for others can make your day a little better too. Being caring toward others can help reduce your own stress.



Decaffeinate: Caffeine can help you stay awake but it can also make you feel tense, jittery, and stressed. Cutting back or even doing away with caffeine can help reduce your feelings of stress. Try switching to herbal tea or even hot water with lemon. This allows you to enjoy a beverage without the caffeine.



Accept: Life is full of twists and turns. You will always have some stress in your life. It helps to understand that there will be good days and bad days.