

# 4 Lifestyle Tips for Managing Stress

By adopting a healthy lifestyle, you can fight stress and overcome depression. Luckily, healthy living doesn't have to be complicated. Try these four fun tips for a happier body and mind.

## 1. Play Harder

If you are struggling with stress management, you are probably working too hard. Unfortunately, working less isn't always an option but despite that, you can still find time for a hobby--ideally an active one--to throw yourself into after work instead of lounging at home.

Granted, you may feel exhausted by the end of the day and want nothing more than to sink into the couch with a bite to eat, something to drink, and a good show to watch. Even so, you will be surprised at how much energy your body is still storing when you challenge it with something active.

Alternatively, you can try starting instead of ending your day actively. Finding the motivation to get out of bed in the morning is difficult enough as is, and trying to get up even earlier for a strenuous and dreaded workout routine is setting yourself up for failure. That's why it's so important to find an active hobby that you can look forward to and genuinely enjoy.

When the stresses of life are getting you down, find a way to play--because staying physically active has been shown to be especially beneficial when coping with depression.

## 2. Do Yoga

Your mind and body alike could certainly benefit from some deep yoga stretches and even a bit of meditation. Yoga is a godsend for mind, body, and soul. While many elements are slow and soothing, the practice poses many intense physical challenges.

Numerous studies have been done on the effect of yoga on the state of the mind and have concluded that it plays an effective part in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. For this reason, it is recommended as a complementary medicinal treatment for these disorders.

Why not try it out for yourself? When you wake up, find a patch of grass in the morning sun and try some sun salutations. This flowing series of yoga poses is a core sequence in almost any practice and carries spiritual as well as physical benefits by awakening our inner energy and improving the strength and flexibility of our muscles.

### **3. Rethink Your Diet**

Are you eating freshly prepared and well-balanced meals when your body needs them or simply filling up on mostly unhealthy snacks throughout the day?

Think of how you can improve your diet by replacing quick snacks and pre-packaged meals with fresh and nutritious ingredients. Try to get some healthy fats by eating fish, nuts, or avocados, along with whole grains or legumes and an ample serving of vegetables. Replace sugary snacks with a piece of fruit, a handful of nuts, or a piece of dark chocolate.

### **4. Get a Massage**

If all of these tips seem like more than you feel physically or mentally capable of at this moment, you can start with something that requires no more exertion from you than booking an appointment.

That's right: massage therapy effectively lowers cortisol levels by up to fifty percent. Because it can also potentially increase levels of serotonin and dopamine, getting a massage can capably stabilize your mood.

By relieving pain and tension in your muscles, massage therapy increases the flow of blood through your body and helps you relax. Thus, it can alleviate many of the physical symptoms associated with stress and depression and well as promote a more stable state of mind.