



Stress Less Checklist

Tips & Tricks

Long term stress can negatively impact your health.

Different people feel and deal with stress in different ways. Continued strain on your body from stress can contribute to many serious health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression or anxiety. Stress also suppresses your immune system, leading to frequent flus and colds, and affects digestion, sleep, and reproductive systems.¹ Many people also complain of effects like headaches, sleeplessness, sadness, anger or irritability.

Bottom Line: You can't be healthy and stressed out at the same time!

Follow this stress less checklist, to start feeling better today:

- ❑ **Sleep:** Make sleep a priority. Aim for 7 hours minimum a night. Try and go to sleep and wake up at the same time everyday. Avoid screen time before bed. Create a bedtime routine that is relaxing - bath, gentle stretching, reading, etc.
- ❑ **Nourish:** Alcohol is a depressant. (sorry!) Best to keep intake to a minimum or take a break for a while. Stimulants like coffee can also make stress sufferers more anxious. Focus on your intake of vegetables, lean protein and healthy fats. Avoid excess sugar, processed foods, caffeine and alcohol. Drink half your weight in oz of water a day.
- ❑ **Meditate:** Create a daily breath practice. Aim for a minimum of 5 minutes a day of seated meditation or slow moving meditation like restorative yoga, walking in nature, Qigong, Tai Chi, etc. Opportunities to pause and breathe are everywhere. Connect with your breath while in the shower or add some focused breathing while you drink your coffee or tea in the morning. Also, essential oils are great excuse to breathe! Keep some with you as you travel throughout your day, place a drop in your hands, rub together and take 5 to 10 slow deep inhales and exhales.. Also, check out the apps [Calm](#), [Headspace](#) or [Insight Timer](#) for guided options and inspiration.
- ❑ **Morning/Night Time Routine:** Set aside time each day to journal, make to-do lists, track goals or make plans for your day. Putting pen to paper and writing down your ideas and visions for your life is a necessary tool to help you feel more productive, focused and less stressed. Starting off each day with a supporting [adaptogenic elixir](#) is also a great routine to get into.
- ❑ **Self-Care Routine:** You can't pour from an empty cup! Creating a daily self-care routine is very important to counteract stress and anxiety. Self-care can be done every morning or night (or both!) and doesn't have to take a ton of time. Some ideas for a supportive morning routine include waking early for alone time and starting your day by drinking a glass of water or tea, journaling, exercising, reading or meditating. Avoid electronics for a while when you first wake if you can too. A night time routine could include reading, journaling, meditation, bath, face mask (or some other grooming) or planning for the next day.
- ❑ **Nature:** Get in nature as much as possible, daily if you can. A 2015 study, done at Stanford, found that those who walked in nature experienced less anxiety, rumination (focused attention on negative aspects of oneself), and negative affect, as well as more positive emotions, such as happiness.² Additionally, just 15 minutes of sun exposure a day will also help to boost your serotonin levels. Higher levels of serotonin correlate with better mood and feelings of satisfaction and calmness, and lower levels link to depression and anxiety.

¹ "Stress - National Institute of Mental Health - NIH." <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml>. Accessed 26 Nov. 2017.

² "5 Benefits Of Being Outdoors | HuffPost - Huffington Post." 7 Jun. 2017, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/5-benefits-of-being-outdoors_us_5938266ce4b014ae8c69dce0. Accessed 2 Dec. 2017.