



April Is National Stress Awareness Month



Take Time To Unwind

It's healthy to relax, renew and rejuvenate

Stress happens.

Sometimes it's unavoidable. At times it's unbearable.

Taking time for yourself is a necessity.

Stress Really Can Make You Physically Sick

Stress does not merely afflict your mind; it can also affect you on a cellular level.

Long-term stress can lead to a wide range of illnesses – from headaches to stomach disorders to depression.

It can even increase the risk of serious conditions like stroke and heart disease.

Understanding the mind/stress/health connection can help you better manage stress and improve your health and well-being.

The sympathetic stress response is a survival mechanism that's "hard wired" into our nervous systems.

This automatic response is necessary for mobilizing quick reflexes when there is imminent danger, such as swerving to avoid a car crash.

When you perceive a threat, stress hormones rush into your bloodstream—increasing heart rate, blood pressure and glucose levels.

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Other hormones also suppress functions like digestion and the immune system, which is one reason why chronic stress can leave you more vulnerable to illness.

Danger triggers the stress response – but, unfortunately, so can work conflicts, worry over debt, bad memories or anxiety.

Although one bad day at work won't hurt your health, weeks or months of stress can dampen your immune response and raise your risk for disease.

– U.S. Department of
Health & Human Services

Fight That Stress

If you suffer from chronic stress and can't influence or change the situation, then you'll need to change your approach.

Be flexible. Remember, you can choose how you respond to things that cause you stress, and you may have to try various options.

- Recognize when you don't have control, and, as the song says, let it go.
- Don't get anxious about

situations that you can't change.

- Take control of your own reactions, and focus on what makes you feel calm and in control. This may take some practice, but it pays off in peace of mind.

Develop a vision for healthy living, wellness, and personal-professional growth and set realistic goals to help you realize your vision.

Relax and Recharge

Be sure to make time for fun and relaxation so you'll be better able to handle life's stress.

Carve some time out of your day – even 10 to 15 minutes – to take care of yourself. Remember that exercise is an excellent stress reliever.

Everyone has different ways to relax and unwind. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Take a walk
- Read a book

- Go for a run
- Have a cup of tea
- Play a sport
- Spend time with a friend or loved one
- Meditate
- Do yoga

While you can't avoid stress, you can minimize it by changing how you choose to respond to it.

The ultimate reward is a healthy, balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation and fun.

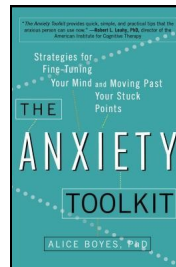
How To Meditate

1. Get into a comfortable position, sitting or lying.
2. Exhale completely.
3. Inhale and mentally think "one". Pause a moment, think the word "and" and then exhale. As you exhale, think the word "joy" and imagine the tension leaving your body.
4. Repeat for a few minutes.

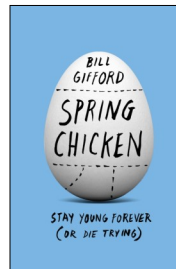


New Books at the Meriden Library

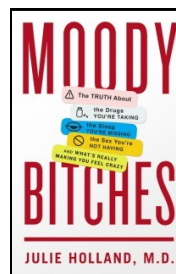
These health-related books can be found on the "New Books" shelves:



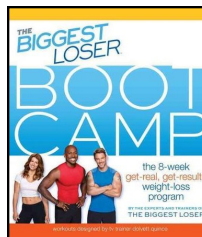
The Anxiety Toolkit: Strategies for Fine-Tuning Your Mind and Moving Past Your Stuck Points by Alice Boyes, PhD
616.85 BO



Spring Chicken: Stay Young Forever (Or Die Trying) by Bill Gifford
612.68 GI



Moody Bitches: The Truth About the Drugs You're Taking, the Sleep You're Missing, the Sex You're Not Having, and What's Really Making You Crazy by Julie Holland, M.D.
616.85 HO



The Biggest Loser Boot Camp, 613.7 BI