Stress

Did you know that more than 40% of college students have felt more than an average amount of stress within the last year?

What is Stress?
Stress is defined as a response to a demand that is placed upon you. Stress can be both positive and negative. A positive stress is a short-term physiological tension and added mental alertness that subsides when the challenge is met. When you are unable to return to a relaxed state, that is when stress becomes negative. Stress is a part of life, but the healthier you are, the better able you are to manage stress when it happens.

Common Causes Among Students
- Poor Sleeping Habits
- Academic Pressure
- Full Schedules
- Poor Eating Habits
- Relationship Break-ups

Ways to Reduce Stress
- Alter your Attitude
- Mind/Body Relaxation Techniques
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Take Mini-Vacations
- Time Management
- Spirituality
- Physical Activity
- Healthy Relationships
- Adequate amounts of Sleep

Stress and Sleep

Stress and sleep problems often occur together. Consistent sleep is critical for a healthy life. On average, most college students get 6-7 hours of sleep per night.

Why do we need sleep?
- Restores energy
- Fights off illness
- Clear thinking
- Strengthens memory
- Produces positive moods

How much sleep do we need?
Most adults need between 6-10 hours of sleep per night. If you find yourself sleeping more on the weekends, you are more than likely not getting enough during the week. Try for 7-8 hours and see how you feel!
**Establishing a Sleep Ritual**

- Maintain a regular wake-time schedule—including weekends
- Establish a regular relaxing bedtime routine—soaking in a hot tub, reading a book, listening to music
- Create a sleep-conducive environment—dark, quiet, and cool
- Sleep on comfortable mattresses and pillows
- Use bedroom for sleep and sex only
- Finish eating 2-3 hours before bedtime
- Exercise regularly—best to finish workout 2 hours before bedtime
- Avoid caffeine 6 hours before bedtime
- Avoid nicotine close to bedtime
- Avoid alcohol use close to bedtime

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**The Perfect Night’s Sleep Starts Long Before You Get Into Bed**

Searching for the ever-elusive perfect night’s sleep? Prevent sleep sabotage by sticking to this pre-bedtime timeline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOURS BEFORE BED</th>
<th>STOP DRINKING CAFFEINE</th>
<th>STOP DRINKING ALCOHOL</th>
<th>FINISH EXERCISING</th>
<th>TURN OFF ELECTRONICS</th>
<th>SLEEP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 HRS</td>
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<td>NIGHTS</td>
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<td>1 HRS</td>
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Finish eating dinner (2-3 hours) Stop working, studying & stressing

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**Deep Breathing, Meditation, and Aromatherapy Techniques**

- **Deep Breathing**
  - 5-5-5
  - 7-7-7

- **Meditation**
  - Mindfulness
  - Visualization

- **Aromatherapy**
  - Essential Oils

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleep Tracker Apps for Smartphones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SleepBot</td>
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<td>Sleep 101</td>
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<td>Basis—Fitness, Sleep, &amp; Stress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deep Breath Meditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fit Bit</td>
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<td>Jawbone UP</td>
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*Sources: National Sleep Foundation, Michael A. Grandner, Ph.D., WebMD*