

# MANAGING STRESS

## TIP SHEET



As you “stress out” about incidents that occur in your day-to-day life, your body produces stress hormones that may disrupt your appetite, sleep pattern and mood. These hormones contribute to your life’s outlook - how good or bad you feel about yourself and the world around you. They affect your interpersonal relationships, and have a lasting impact on your health.

Be a scientist and experiment with the following life areas to make a positive difference in your life. Choose one area below and take action on it. Once you’ve made that stress management skill your habit, choose another...and then another...until your life is flowing along the way you wish.

**THINK:** You are what you think – so think positively! As Henry Ford said, “If you think you can or you think you cannot, either way you are right.” Remind yourself of what choices you have each day. Quiet that negative voice that compares you to others, that tells you you’re “not enough” [good, rich, smart, thin, tall, etc]. Be gentle on yourself; what words of encouragement would you tell a friend in the same situation? Cheer yourself in the same way.

**EAT:** Eating changes your mood – for better or worse. Be sure to include water, vitamin B complex, and vitamin C in your daily diet to reduce the effects that stress hormones may have on your body. Reduce your caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol intake, then compare the before-and-after differences in how you handle everyday stressors. We tend to crave comfort foods – foods typically high in fat, sugar, salt, carbohydrates and/or calories – for their short-lived mood changing effects. Their negative impact on health is worse in the long run, so be sure to make food choices that eliminate stress inside your body, so it doesn’t show up on the outside.

**SLEEP:** Find the amount of sleep that keeps your mood stable, your mind alert, and your outlook positive. When you don’t rest your mind and body for sufficient time periods every day, the body is unable to properly repair damage caused by the stress hormones that have been circulating. Set a sleep schedule that allows you between 6-9 hours of restorative sleep every night for life-long health.

**WORK:** Always do the best you can do at what you can do; after all, you are only one person and cannot do it all. Prioritize your work tasks and schedule them into your daily calendar. Do your best to focus on work while at work, and on home while at home.

**PLAY:** Schedule time for yourself everyday; even as little as 15 minutes can have lasting positive effects on your overall health. Use that time for solitude, rest, exercise\*, creativity, socializing with friends/family/ significant other, or any activity that fulfills you.

\*Consult with your healthcare professional to create a plan that’s right for you.

For assistance with stress management or other life areas,  
call your Employee Assistance Program. We’ll be glad to help!

**1.800.451.1834**

