StressBusters

Brought to you by the Office of Health Promotion
studenthealth.emory.edu/hp
STRESS = DEMANDS > RESOURCES

Stress happens when your **demands** exceed your **resources** and can result in mental and physical exhaustion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are your demands?</th>
<th>What are your resources?</th>
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<td>Classes</td>
<td>Supportive friends</td>
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<td>Homework</td>
<td>Time management skills</td>
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<td>Social Life</td>
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<td>Healthy eating &amp; sleeping habits</td>
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FYI - Dependence on drugs, alcohol, nicotine or caffeine will only aggravate your body’s reaction to stress. To feel better, also limit sugar and high carb foods. Whole grains, fruits and vegetables, low-fat proteins, and enough water can help your body fight stress.

For more information, contact Heather Zesiger, MPH, MCHES
Director, Office of Health Promotion
heather.zesiger@emory.edu or 404-727-1736
Take a deep breath
Ask for help
from your professor, advisor, friend, mentor, tutor, counselor, health educator
Make a plan.
Some students find it helpful to use a smart phone or an electronic schedule to manage their time
Others use calendars, journals, index cards or sticky notes.
Experiment to find a system that works best for you and keep it updated.
Back-up your calendar if possible so you won’t lose everything
if it is stolen or misplaced.
Be honest with yourself
regarding your strengths and weaknesses.
Chose to do the harder tasks, assignments and projects when you are
most rested – resist the urge to save the hardest task for last!
Use “lost” time
While you are standing in lines, showering, commuting, etc., clear your mind
and relieve stress by breathing deeply and slowly OR use the time to brainstorm
how to tackle creative projects that are coming up.
You may feel less anxious if you feel you aren’t “wasting” time.
Don’t procrastinate
Start as early as possible on your projects.
Equipment of materials may take longer to use than you first planned.
Sleep is your friend
Getting enough sleep to stay alert during the day will help you
be the most efficient and productive with your time.
Avoid drugs
which claim to help you stay awake and alert.
Dependence on these drugs can be harmful and will cost you more time (and money) in the long run.
Do what you need to do to feel your best
Health-enhancing behaviors, even for the chronically time-deprived,
include taking full breaths, exercising when possible, meditating as a study break,
talking with friends, laughing, smiling, taking a multi-vitamin or nutrition supplement,
eating healthy foods for energy and brain function, taking a walk, washing your hands regularly
(to reduce the risk for contagious illness), bathing or showering, exchanging massages with a friend, hugging.
Set goals
Write them down.
Keep them where you can see them when you need inspiration
or a “second wind” to help you get through a tough assignment.
Posting photos of friends, family, pets or other sources of inspiration
can also help you get through the tough times.
SleepWell
Sleep Better, Study Better, Perform Better

Resource Page

Sleep for Success

Why is sleep so important?
- Sleep restores energy to muscles.
- Memory and new learning is consolidated during sleep.
- Your immune system recharges during sleep.
- Inconsistent sleep patterns or lack of sufficient sleep can lead to:
  Decreased:
  - ↓ Grades
  - ↓ Attention
  - ↓ Memory
  Increased:
  - ↑ Mood Swings
  - ↑ Anger
  - ↑ Depression

Healthy Sleep Habits:
- Relax before bedtime (stretching, visualization, meditation, etc.).
- Go to bed and wake up at approximately the same time each day. (Yes, even on weekends!)
- Avoid naps entirely or limit naps to 45 minutes in the early afternoon (or no later than 4 pm).
- Exercise on a regular basis but avoid strenuous activity within 4 hours of bedtime.
- Avoid substances with caffeine within 4 hours of bedtime; avoid alcohol within 2 hours of bedtime.
- A light carbohydrate snack and dairy before bedtime may help you sleep: yogurt, plain cookies such as vanilla wafers or graham crackers with milk, small lean meat sandwich. Avoid high fat foods or large amounts of protein that your body has to stay "awake" to digest (pizza, wings, etc.).
- Exposure to natural light, such as a walk outside in the morning, will help you to wake up and feel alert.

Do TV or Video Games Impact Sleep?
Yes. Exciting television programs, movies, and video games can over-stimulate you and make it harder to fall asleep. The “glow” from electronic devices can inhibit our natural sleep cycle. If you have trouble falling asleep, avoid using your computer or other devices for at least an hour before you try to fall asleep.

What should I do if I think too much and can't sleep?
- Keep blank paper next to your bed and write out all the things you are thinking about.
- Elicit the relaxation response through breathing exercises or meditation.

What should I do if my roommate or residence hall is too noisy?
- You can use soft, disposable earplugs which will reduce the noise. You can also use a sleep mask to cover your eyes if your roommate leaves the light on.
- Talk to your roommate to make a plan that better meets both of your needs. Talk to your RA if the entire hall tends to be noisy, or, if you live off campus talk to your housemates and/or landlord.

What if I like to stay up late on the weekend?
If you don’t feel well rested, then getting consistent sleep, even on weekends could help a lot. But, if you just can’t shake the party bug:
- If possible, take classes that start later.
- If you select Friday as your only late night out, that will give you more time to resume your sleep schedule for Monday.
- Get outside and exercise in the morning; sunshine and exercise can reset the biological sleep clock.

A Bed is a Bed, not a Desk - Stimulus Control Instructions

Part of learning to sleep better is helping your brain associate your bed with sleep, and only with sleep. If you do your homework in bed, or do exciting things like watch movies in bed or spend a lot of time online with your laptop in bed, you may find it difficult to then relax and sleep in bed. Take advantage of other locations to study and socialize (lounges, library, common areas, cafes and coffee shops, etc.).

To turn your bed into a cue for sleep:

1. Use your bed only for sleep and intimacy.

2. Establish a set of regular pre-sleep routines that signal to your brain that it is time for sleep. Each night do the same wind-down routine. Examples: prepare materials for the next day, tidy up room, clear off bed, take a warm shower, say good-night to friends and loved ones, meditate or pray, etc. If you have trouble quieting your mind, try breathing exercises to elicit your body’s relaxation response.

3. At bedtime: Lie down intending to sleep only when sleepy. If unable to fall asleep after about 15 minutes, get up and go into another room. If in a residence hall, get out of bed and do something relaxing, not homework (homework will just wake up your brain again). Try to avoid bright lights from a television or computer during this time. Return to bed only after you feel sleepy. If, once in bed, or if you re-awake at a later time and cannot fall asleep within 15 minutes, get out of bed once more and repeat the process.

Products that May Negatively Impact Sleep

Beverages and Candy that Contain Caffeine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beverage</th>
<th>Caffeine Content (mg)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Coffee (8 oz)</td>
<td>60 – 350 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decaffeinated Coffee</td>
<td>2 – 4 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Tea (8 oz)</td>
<td>30 – 120 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Tea</td>
<td>30 – 50 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colas (Coke, Pepsi, Root Beer, etc)</td>
<td>20 – 60 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Drinks (Red Bull, Vault, Full Throttle, Monster)</td>
<td>50-150 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate (per oz)</td>
<td>8 - 20 mg</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Caffeine content information retrieved 12/6/07 from http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/caffeine/AN01211

Medications

Some over-the-counter medicines contain stimulants such as caffeine or pseudoephedrine. Some prescription medications could interfere with sleep or make you too sleepy; be sure to talk with your health care provider and/or pharmacist about possible side effects of any medications you may be taking.

Alcohol

Do not drink alcoholic beverages within 2 hours of bedtime. Alcohol, since it is a sedative, may make you feel tired, but as your body metabolizes the alcohol it disrupts the sleep process and you may not awaken feeling rested.

Resources

Emory University Student Health and Counseling Services

- Student Health Services Appointments – 404-727-7551 or schedule online via the Patient Portal at http://studenthealth.emory.edu
  - Visits with health care providers at Student Health and Counseling Services are FREE and confidential. Charges may be incurred for lab tests or medications and supplies.
- Office of Health Promotion Appointments –
  - To schedule an appointment to discuss sleep strategies with a health educator, call Heather Zesiger directly at 404-727-1736 or send her a secure message via the Patient Portal.
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Appointments – 404-727-7450

© September 2013 Emory University. This handout is adapted from materials described in “Development and Evaluation of the Sleep Treatment and Education Program for Students (STEPS),” Journal of American College Health, Vol. 54, No.4 January/February 2006. See also Jacobs, Gregg D. (2009). Say Goodnight to Insomnia. New York, NY: Holt. For more information about resources at Emory, contact Heather Zesiger, MPH, MCHES, Emory Student Health & Counseling Services, 404-727-1736.

http://studenthealth.emory.edu/hp/services/other_services.html
ChillWell

How Emory Students Reduce Stress

Listen to music
Take a walk
Take a nap
Laugh a little (or a lot)
Watch a movie
Resources for Developing a Relaxation Response

**Online tools and downloads**

Virtual Meditation Rooms
• http://life.gaiam.com/gaiam/p/Gaiam-Life-Meditation-Rooms.html

Downloadable Relaxation Scripts and Audio Files
• http://www.allaboutdepression.com/relax/

StressBusters@Emory Resource Kit
• http://studenthealth.emory.edu/hp → follow the menu links to “handouts”

**Meditation Resources**

Meditation Log: http://studenthealth.emory.edu/hp/documents/pdfs/pdfs_meditationlog.pdf

**Books**


**iTunesU – Exclusively Emory**

Free podcasts on health topics of interest to Emory students are available on http://itunes.emory.edu/ in the *Exclusively Emory* section. To access them: login (same as you would for OPUS), select “Campus Life” and then click on the “Health Promotion” album. If iTunes is not installed on the computer you are using, you will need to download free software before proceeding. We’ve created podcasts on sleep, stress, meditation, nutrition, hookahs, and more. You’ll also find videos and animated shorts including an introduction to Student Health and Counseling Services, healthy relationships, flu shots, and *Swoop visits the doctor*. We’re always eager to work with students interested in helping us develop and record podcasts.
**Smart Snacking for Late-Night Studying**

**Need to stay awake to write the paper or read chapters and chapters... or Both?!**
Is the following scenario familiar?
It’s late; you’re hungry and tired and you have hours of studying ahead. What can you eat that will help keep you thinking, not put you to sleep, but also won’t keep you from sleeping when you need it?

Research has suggested that some foods may help promote alertness while other foods may enhance relaxation and possible sleepiness.

**Need a snack and you’re going to sleep in an hour or so?**
Choose foods which are lowfat, high in carbohydrate content (may enhance tryptophan uptake). Increased tryptophan uptake may enhance relaxation and sleepiness. Avoid high fat foods as they may take longer to digest, which may compromise deep sleep. Keep the portions moderate—avoid stuffing yourself.
For some, spicy foods are stimulating, so you may want to avoid those, too.
Here are some suggestions:
- Yogurt with cereal
- Cereal with milk
- Lowfat cookies such as plain graham crackers

**Need to stay alert for hours?**
Focus on foods that are high in protein, moderate-to-low in both fat & carbohydrate content. More at one time is not better! A large feeding may promote sleepiness. Stay well-hydrated, as dehydration can enhance fatigue (and appetite!)

Try these high protein snacks:
- Cottage cheese or greek yogurt with small amount of cereal or fruit if needed
- Half or whole lean meat sandwich (generous with the lean meat)
- Hummus and veggies
- Nutrition Bar that contains at least 15 grams protein
- Edamame

**Did you know?**
Currently enrolled Emory students can make a free, confidential appointment with our dietitian by calling 404-727-7551, ext 1 or make an appointment on line via Your Patient Portal: http://studenthealth.emory.edu
Learn to manage your stress better, while relieving certain physical and emotional symptoms of stress.

Topics include:
Time management, decision making, handling stress in the moment, happiness, assertiveness, personality and stress, self-care, being in the present moment, managing thoughts and feelings, self-compassion, nature and relaxation.

Biofeedback for learning relaxation skills

Included in each session is hands-on training with computerized monitoring and feedback of the body’s stress and relaxation responses.

Call 404-727-7450 to schedule an initial evaluation for services at Counseling and Psychological Services
1462 Clifton Rd, Suite 235