

Facts on Stress

What is stress? “It is physical, mental, or emotional tension.”

Causes of Stress in Older Adults:

- Retirement worries
- Personal illness
- Caregiving
- Sexual difficulties
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Dependent parents and/or adult children
- Grandparenting
- Divorce

Symptoms of Stress:

- Feeling trapped
- Excessive worrying
- Difficulty concentrating
- Affected sleep, eating, job, relationships, everyday life

Ways to Reduce Stress:

- Relax each day (massage, soothing music, yoga)
- Do an enjoyable activity every day
- Eat nutritious foods and get adequate sleep
- Share feelings with trustworthy friends, family, clergy, or counselor
- Laugh often at situations or movies
- Keep focused on the present

Stress First Aid—try one of these quick relaxation techniques

- **Deep Breathing:** breathe in through your nose, hold your breath four counts and breathe out through your mouth.
- **Self Talk:** say “I am” as you inhale and “calm” as you exhale.
- **Write it Out:** sit down with pen and paper to write down your concerns and potential solutions to the problems.
- **Take a Break:** change scenery by doing something simple—like taking a walk outdoors or going to a favorite quiet area.

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