



MENTAL HEALTHY NEWSLETTER



As mental health issues among individuals continue to rise year by year, month by month, and day by day, so do topics around ending the stigma on mental health. The *Mental Healthy Newsletter* focuses on raising awareness surrounding mental health and decreasing the stigma on campus.

LOOK FORWARD TO:

- ✓ Education, information, and resources about mental illness
- ✓ Tips on mental health and wellness
- ✓ A dose of inspiration and positive affirmations to get you through

Now, let's get into the November Mental Healthy Newsletter!

This month's focus looks at "International Stress Awareness Day," which is recognized on the first Wednesday of every November, and International Stress Awareness Week running from October 30th - November 3rd, 2023. This year's theme is stress and emotional management, which aims to raise awareness about stress and how too much stress can impact mental and physical health, help you understand and recognize the warning signs, and provide information on how people can manage stress in their lives.

Each month the topic will focus on something different, providing you with up-to-date information and resources within the mental health field. If you have a specific topic or issue surrounding mental health that you would like to see here, please send an email to Kaisha Yeager at kyeager@fpctx.edu.

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International Stress Awareness Week 2023



International Stress Awareness Week is an annual event that aims to raise awareness of stress, including discussion on the prevalence of stress, how too much stress can impact mental and physical health, how it can be managed and prevented, and to remind oneself not to stress about situations that are out of your control.

International Stress Awareness Week runs from October 30th - November 3, 2023, with the highlight being Stress Awareness Day on Wednesday, November 1, 2023. This year's focus will be on stress and emotional management.



To honor this day, consider participating in a stress-relief activity, such as creating a DIY stress ball or writing in a journal.



WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is the body's natural reaction to perceived threats, danger, or emotional pressure. We all experience stress and need it to function. But, when stress interferes with our lives, it can become a problem.

WARNING SIGNS

Warning signs of stress may vary from person to person. Stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings, and your behavior. Knowing common stress symptoms can help you manage them.

COPING WITH STRESS

Healthy coping strategies and mechanisms can help individuals manage stress and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Fortunately, there are several techniques and sources to help you cope!

What is Stress?



Should we expect to be stressed in difficult situations? Yes. Stress can be healthy, as it is our body's automatic response to pressure or perceived danger. But, it can also be an adverse reaction to excessive pressures and other types of demands over time. Common sources include life changes, job loss, death, academics, emotional distress, physical health issues, environmental factors, and traumatic events. If unaddressed, chronic stress can lead to serious physical and mental health issues.

[Read More](#)

Physical and Mental Effects

Physical:

- Insomnia
- High Blood Pressure
- Digestive Issues
- Lowered Immune System
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Migraines



Mental:

- Anxiety Disorders
- Depressive Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Panic Attacks
- Stress-related Disorders
- Sleep-wake Disorders (Insomnia)

Prevalence and Statistics

Among college students:

- 30% of college students reported that stress had negatively affected their academic performance (ADAA, 2020).
- College Athletes report depression and anxiety at roughly the same rates as the general population (Greene, 2023).
- 85% of college students reported feeling overwhelmed by everything they had to do (ADAA, 2020).

Among Higher Ed. Employees:

- Around 75%–90% of doctor visits in the United States are in some way related to stress (APA, 2022).
- 50% of faculty respondents reported a significant increase in emotional drain and work-related stress (Riba & Malani, 2022)
- 77% of education staff were suffering from poor mental health and 72% from stress (Wray and Kinman, 2021).



[Click here for a free stress assessment](#)

Know the Warning Signs!

[Click here](#) to map out your warning signs

Warning signs are much like the physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms we experience when we are stressed. Stress can manifest in different ways in different people, but there are some common signs and symptoms that people may experience when they are under stress.



Cognitive

- Forgetfulness or Memory Loss
- Difficulty Focusing or Concentrating
- Excessive Worry
- Racing thoughts or Brain Fog

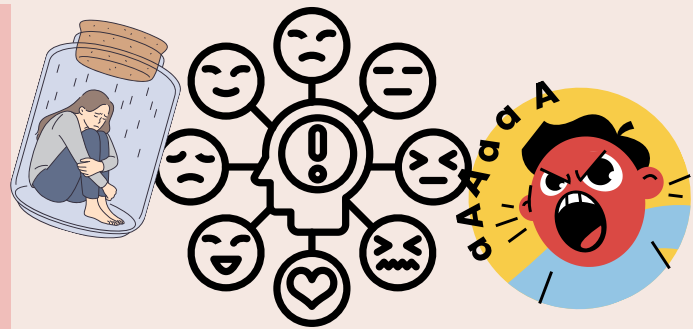


Physical

- Aches and Pains
- Headaches
- Low Sex Drive
- Chest Pain/ Rapid Heartbeat
- Constipation/Diarrhea
- Weakened Immune System
- Skin issues/ Acne

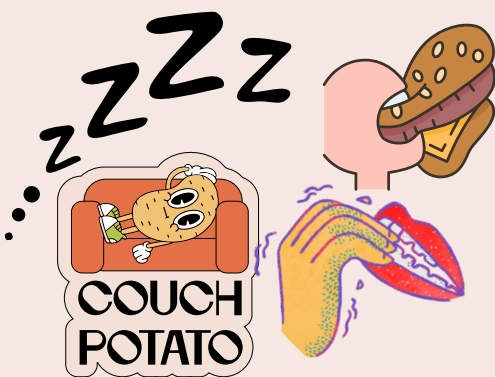
Emotional

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Irritability
- Sudden changes in mood
- Lack of motivation
- Restlessness



Behavioral

- Overeating/ Poor Appetite
- Fatigue
- Excessive Sleeping/ Difficulty Sleeping
- Neglecting Responsibilities
- Alcohol/Drug Use
- Nervous habits (i.e., nail biting, skin picking)



Coping with Stress

[Click here for interactive web games](#)

Learning to cope in a healthy way will help you, the people you care about, and those around you become more resilient when faced with stress and stress provoking situations. *How do you cope with stress?*



Prevention and Relief

- 1. Exercise.** Physical activity can help improve sleep and overall mood, which helps to renew the brain and body and improve stress management.
- 2. Diet.** A healthy diet can help strengthen your immune system and protect your cells against damage from chronic stress.
- 3. Relaxation Techniques.** Yoga, Meditation, Journaling, and Deep Breathing are all forms of relaxation that activate your parasympathetic nervous system, which tells your body to calm down.
- 4. Take a Break.** Disconnecting from the world around you will allow your brain and body time off from the demands in your life. **Rest. Lighten the load.**

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Resources

Reads

Grounding Techniques
Woody Schuldt, LMHC

Grounding Exercises: Using Your 5 Senses for Anxiety Relief

Grounding & Breathing Exercises for Calming Your Nervous System

Mindfulness meditation: A research-proven way to reduce stress

Coping with Stress



Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide

Media



How stress affects your brain - Madhumita Murgia



How stress affects your body - Sharon Horesh Bergquist



Breathe to Heal | Max Strom | TEDxCapeMay



A quick mindfulness guided meditation



Meditation for Stress