

# Managing Stress

Stress can make you feel drained, anxious, even depressed. And while there are several ways to manage runaway stress, none is as enjoyable and effective as a regular exercise routine. Exercise provides excellent stress-relieving benefits.

## How It Works

Exercise causes the brain to release endorphins, opium like substances that ease pain and produce a sense of comfort and euphoria. It also encourages the nerve cells in the brain to secrete other neurotransmitters that improve mood. Deficiencies of these substances have been linked to symptoms of depression, anxiety, impulsiveness, aggression and increased appetite. Exercise increases the levels of these natural antidepressants. Exercise also improves people's ability to relax and sleep, promotes self-esteem and enhances energy, concentration and memory.

## Reducing Moves

The following guidelines can help you find activities likely to be effective for you.

1. Choose activities that are accessible and feasible for you.
2. Exercise every day for at least 30 minutes.
3. Consider Mind / Body activities like yoga and tai chi. Your mind will progressively relax as your body focuses on a series of physical and mental tasks.

## The Ball's in Your Court

Controlling stress ultimately comes down to making time to exercise. Physical activity provides an enjoyable and effective way to cope with life's troubles as it promotes lasting strength and empowerment.