

Stress in University

Common stressors in university life include: greater academic demands, adjusting to living on your own, financial worries about school and future job prospects, time spent away from family and enjoyable activities, exposure to new people and ideas, and relationship stress. One of the most common university stressors is procrastination. Here are some tips to help you cope:

1. **Buy a calendar.** Set up a daily or weekly schedule for yourself, allowing time for class, study, exercise, and other activities that are important or fun. Your schedule doesn't have to be perfect—you can change it as needed.
2. **Keep a “to do” list.** Prioritize your tasks and try to get the most important done on time. Fit the rest in as best as possible, making certain that you can take time for yourself.
3. **Reward yourself for a finished task.** If there is something that may be more difficult and less pleasurable that you need to do and something else that you would truly enjoy doing, postpone the enjoyable activity until you have completed the less pleasurable task.
4. **Ask for help.** Contact Carleton's Learning Support Services, Student Academic Success Centre or Health and Counselling Services.



HCS wants to CU Healthy! The Health Promotion Team at HCS tries to achieve this through our:

- Resource Centre
- Student Peer Interns
- Health Promotion Advisory Committee
- Website (carleton.ca/health)
- Facebook page
- Newsletters, class presentations, workshops and more . . .

The Health Promotion Team promotes healthy lifestyles and wellness and can provide you with information about stress, colds, nutrition, sexuality, alcohol, etc. Contact the Resource Centre for more information at 613-520-2600 ext. 6544 or cu_healthy@carleton.ca.



2600 CTTC Building
613-520-6674
carleton.ca/health



Are you stressed yet?



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Why Would I Want Stress?

A certain amount of stress enables you to meet the day's challenges. What's unhealthy are large amounts of stress or prolonged periods of unrelied stress. Negative, excessive stress may be a key element in half of all illnesses, ranging from the common cold to heart disease. Studies suggest that your stress level affects your immune and nervous systems, heart function, metabolism, and hormone levels. The key is to adapt to changes and figure out how to deal with the stresses of life.

The Signs Of Stress

You will have a unique combination of stress symptoms.

They may include:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| trouble sleeping | headaches |
| upset stomach | feeling tired |
| fast heart rate | irritability |
| poor concentration | cold sweats |
| hunched shoulders | clenched jaw |

Ways To Prevent Stress

Do things step by step. Concentrate on the task at hand. Try not to worry about all the other things you need to do.

Avoid common daily annoyances that can cause stress. Many everyday stressors can be planned for. If you find you're always rushing or late, leave a little earlier.

Managing Stress

You can't avoid all stress. If you find that you're showing signs of too much stress for too long, pick and choose from the following strategies to manage it:

Take a 2-hour mini-vacation. You don't have to go to the Bahamas. Go see an enjoyable movie. Listen to your favourite CD. Talk with a friend.

Spend some time alone every day—even if it's just in the bathroom.

Find out how much sleep you need and get it. Set your alarm for 8 hours. If you wake up refreshed for 4 days in a row, set it back 15 minutes. Keep doing this until you're getting just enough sleep to feel rested.

Pick a form of exercise that is stress reducing. Some possibilities include:
Tai chi Bike riding Dancing
Walking Swimming Yoga

Be aware of competition. Competition can be stressful. Competing for grades might be enough competition in your life right now. If that's the case, avoid competitive sports or activities that might increase your stress level.

Have a good friend to talk to. Talking things through can help reduce your stress. If you don't have a close friend or family member, seek out a counsellor.

Wash your hands often to avoid catching colds.

Make it work for you.
A little stress is healthy.



Eat a stress-busting diet. A diet high in complex carbohydrates, a moderate amount of protein and only 20% fat will help you adapt to changes.

Don't depend on alcohol and other drugs to relieve the stress. The use of alcohol and other drugs can generate more stress than it relieves. Knowing your limits and how you react to substances will help you determine if or how much use can be relaxing.

Be aware of what stresses you out and how your body reacts. Then practice the skills that can help you relieve excess stress.

Look for opportunity. Sometimes stressful situations can lead to better outcomes. Try to look for the opportunity that may come from stressful situations. Finding out that you're not really committed to your major can be stressful. But it can lead to finding a more satisfying field of study or career.