

## HEALTH TIP

### Stress

Stress is a fact of life for most people. While you may not be able to get rid of stress, you can look for ways to lower it. Try some of these ideas:

- Learn better ways to manage your time. You may get more done with less stress if you make a schedule. Think about which things are most important, and do those first.
- Find better ways to cope. Look at how you have been dealing with stress. Be honest about what works and what does not. Think about other things that might work better.
- Take good care of yourself. Get plenty of rest. Eat well. Do not smoke. Limit how much alcohol you drink.
- Try out new ways of thinking. When you find yourself starting to worry, try to stop the thoughts. Work on letting go of things you cannot change. Learn to say “no.”
- Ask for help. People who have a strong network of family and friends manage stress better.

Sometimes stress is just too much to handle alone. It can help to talk to a friend or family member, but you may also want to see a counsellor.

#### **How can I relieve stress?**

You will feel better if you can find ways to get stress out of your system. The best ways to relieve stress are different for each person. Try some of these ideas to see which ones work for you:

- Exercise. Regular exercise is one of the best ways to manage stress. Walking is a great way to get started.
- Write. It can really help to write about the things that are bothering you.
- Let your feelings out. Talk, laugh, cry, and express anger when you need to.
- Do something you enjoy. A hobby can help you relax. Volunteer work or work that helps others can be a great stress reliever.
- Learn ways to relax your body. This can include breathing exercises, muscle relaxation exercises, massage, aromatherapy, yoga, or relaxing exercises like tai chi and qi gong.
- Practise “being in the moment.” Try meditation, imagery exercises, or self-hypnosis. Listen to relaxing music. Try to look for the humour in life. (Source: BCHealthGuide)