

# what is >STRESSING< you out?

There is so much pressure to “do and be your best” in school, at home, online, in after-school activities and your social life. Stress is just about everywhere!



## Stress

When your body reacts to stress, you can feel it. It’s the sensation known as fight-or-flight. You may feel energy surge through your body if you are worried or anxious about something, or if you are in an emergency. Your instincts take over and tell you that you are facing danger and you either need to defend yourself (fight) or get away (flight).

### What Stress Can Do

Stress can cause all kinds of problems. It can make a current problem worse or give you health problems such as:

- upset stomach
- headache
- trouble breathing
- dizziness
- chest pains
- heartburn
- muscle pain, aches, cramps
- trouble concentrating
- change in sleep habits
- change in appetite.

Stress affects everyone but reactions to stress vary from person to person. You can’t make stress go away, but you can manage it.

## Time to Stress Less

Reducing stress isn't about changing your life, it's about changing yourself.

To get started, it's important to learn about yourself.

- What do you like?
- What do you dislike?
- What calms you down?
- What stresses you out?

Knowing the answers to the questions will help you be on your way to managing stress.

### Here are some tips to help manage stress

- Maintain good health habits. Eat well-balanced meals and avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine. A healthy body tolerates stress more effectively.
- Get some kind of physical activity every day. Start with a short walk or stretching.
- Do an activity you enjoy.
- Get plenty of rest. Your body and mind need to "re-energize" each night.
- If you notice your mind racing or worrying about the past or future, take a minute to breathe deeply.
- Don't worry about things you can't change.
- Develop a positive attitude towards life. Recognize that some stress is useful and necessary.
- Avoid holding in feelings day after day. Instead, find a safe place to feel, express and embrace them.

For additional tips and resources to help you stress less, visit [changetochill.org](http://changetochill.org).

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to **chill**™



### When to Get Help

Talk with your parents or another close family member or friend if stress interferes with your everyday life or you are having physical problems.

If you are or someone close to you is in crisis, call the free, 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).