



How to Feel Better in Less Than 15 Minutes

Medically Reviewed by T. Wheeler, MD on Mar 06, 2021

Clear Your Mind

Take a brief meditation break. It's simple: Sit quietly, close your eyes, and focus on your breathing. When you get distracted, just bring your attention back to your breath.

When you're done, you could feel more positive and patient. That's just what you need to shift the energy of your day and help you bounce back from stress.

Get Outside

Step outdoors for a few minutes to pull some weeds, sit in the sunshine, or just get some fresh air. Research shows that time outside can give you more energy, a better memory, and less anxiety. Even if you're in a city, notice trees, flowers, and parks. Soak up nature to give yourself a boost.

Have a Laugh

Read a few pages of a funny book, watch a clip of your favorite comedian, or call a friend who always cracks you up. Laughter obviously lightens your mood, plus it stimulates your heart, lungs, and muscles. It makes your brain release more

feel-good endorphins. And it can relax your muscles and help your circulation.

Count What's Good

Pick up a pen and list at least a few things you're grateful for today. Think about your relationships, things that went well, and any positive parts of your life -- big or small. People who do this feel better and are less bothered by stress. And it can take very little time to do.

Wish Someone Well

Practicing compassion for others tends to make you feel better, too. Choose someone: a friend, family member, co-worker, or even a stranger. In your mind, send them wishes to be happy and healthy and live with ease. This quick exercise can make you more satisfied with your own life.

Take a Walk

Lace up your shoes. A stroll around the neighborhood can lift your mood and bust stress. Stuck in a rut? Research shows your next big idea could be just a walk away. It can boost creative thinking.

Turn on Some Tunes

DJ, put on something peppy! Play a few of your favorite songs to relax and lighten your mood. Research shows music has all kinds of benefits -- it can reduce anxiety and pain. If you feel moved to get up and dance, even better.

Check a Chore Off Your List

What small task has been lurking in the back of your mind for too long? Change that burned-out



light bulb, return that email, make that appointment. The satisfaction of getting something small done could stop stress and give you the momentum to tackle more.

Connect

Call a friend to catch up, email a family member to check in, or text a colleague to meet you for coffee. Making contact with other people builds social connections and gives you more support. Studies support this: Better relationships are one of the best ways to become happier.

Eat a Smart Snack

Fuel up, but keep it healthy and simple. Some ideas:

Oranges. Citrus fruits are high in vitamin C, which is good for your immune system.

Nuts. Enjoy a small handful of walnuts, almonds, or pistachios for some omega-3 fatty acids that even out your stress hormones.

Whole grains. A bowl of oatmeal or a piece of whole wheat toast could help your brain make more serotonin, which can improve your mood.

Do a Good Deed

Open a door for someone. Donate to a cause you believe in. Sign up for a volunteer project. Help a family member with a small task. Studies prove that when you show kindness to other people, it makes you feel good. And it can be quick to do, any day of the week.

Stretch Yourself

Reach for your toes! Take a short break to gently stretch your neck, shoulders, lower back, thighs, and hips. Try yoga moves, like downward dog,

mountain pose, or cat-cow. When you stretch, it lowers stress and sends extra blood to your muscles.

Hug It Out

Find a friend or family member and ask for a hug. That warm squeeze will give you a lift -- and could even make conflict less upsetting, according to one study. Hugging could also help your immune system, another study says.

Give Yourself a Pep Talk

"I can handle this."

Practice positive self-talk. Try to reverse any negative thoughts you have. If you're worried about a mistake you made, tell yourself, "Everyone messes up. I can fix it."

Say a few upbeat mantras to yourself out loud -- it can change your thinking and cut your stress.

Write a Thank You Note

Jot down a few words of appreciation to someone who has helped you. You can express thanks for recent favors, birthday gifts, or long-lasting support. One study showed people who did this actually trained themselves to be more grateful.

webmd.com/balance/stress-management/ss/slideshow-tips-to-feel-better-fast

