

Stress and Stress Management

Stress is a normal part of college life, especially during exams. Healthy stress can improve performance and focus, but too much stress can be detrimental. Poor stress management can lead to poor academic performance and can impact your physical and mental health.

Reduce stress and maintain healthy lifestyle choices by:

- Practicing relaxation techniques
- Leaning on a support network
- Keeping a positive attitude
- Spending time with friends
- Eating nutritious meals and snacks
- Getting some exercise
- Getting the sleep you need to be your best

HOO knew?
82% of first-year students keep track of how many drinks they are having.*

If you feel like celebrating the end of final exams, use protective behaviors to help reduce your risk.

Resources for Managing Stress at UVA

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
(434) 243-5150 weekdays, (434) 972-7004 after hours
For free, confidential counseling to help you manage stress or to join a support group. Call to see how CAPS can best support you. See the website for guided meditations via audio recording: <http://www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/caps/Relaxation.html>.

Center for Clinical Psychology Services at Curry School of Education
(434) 924-7034
For counseling related to stress, academics, or other personal issues. Evening hours available.

Madison House HELP Line
(434) 295-TALK
To talk about anything, anytime, 24/7.

IM-Rec Sports
Take a break December 1-12 to enjoy stress-free activities with the Twelve Days of Fitness.

Attitude is framed by expectations and perspective on the world. Respond to stressful situations with a positive attitude, practical solutions, and a sense of humor.

Exam Season's Greetings

Office of Health Promotion
Department of Student Health
University of Virginia

Support Network

Having a support network of family and friends builds your self-concept and helps you develop healthy ways of coping with stress.

Find Stress Relief Around Grounds

- Take advantage of the hot tub or try yoga at the Rec Center
- Unplug and enjoy the walk to classes without headphones or cellphone
- Give a big hug or say something nice to someone

Relaxation Techniques

Tools to help calm the mind and body include deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness and meditation, prayer, yoga, and massage. Just choose what works best for you.

Deep Breathing

1. Get in a comfortable position with good posture.
2. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
3. Inhale (2 seconds) through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise and the hand on your chest should remain still.
4. Exhale (4 – 8 seconds) through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can. The hand on your stomach should fall and the other should move very little.
5. Repeat for 15 minutes.
6. Practice each day to reduce overall stress and anxiety.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1. Get comfortable and relax with deep breathing.
2. Focus on how your right foot feels. Slowly tense the muscles in your right foot and squeeze tightly for 10 seconds. Relax. Feel the tension flowing away.
3. When you're ready, shift your focus to your left foot. Repeat the muscle tension and release.
4. Move slowly up through your body — legs, abdomen, back, arms, neck and shoulders, face — contracting and relaxing the muscle groups.
5. Practice each day to reduce overall stress and anxiety.

* From the Spring 2013 Health Survey, with responses from 654 UVA students

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Destiny Xi Han, Class of 2017

Plan and prioritize
Don't let your work define you
Be thankful
Be flexible

Take one day at a time
Look at the silver lining
Look at problems as challenges
Live in the moment

Reframe the situation and put things in to perspective
Dissociate yourself from your studies when not working
Don't worry about the future or dwell on the past
Be open to new things
Tell a joke
Laugh

Keep a journal
Have realistic expectations of yourself
Know your limits
Smile
Practice self-affirmation
Ask for help

Go for a walk with a friend
Share your feelings with someone

Go salsa dancing

Forgive

Take a nap

Do a good deed

Play Frisbee golf

Watch a cloud for five minutes on the Lawn
Rent a movie from Clemons and host a movie night in your suite or hall

Drink hot chocolate at the Lighting of the Lawn

Have a dance party in your suite or hall

Participate in your RA's programs