



ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Personal Wellness Consultation & Self-Help ACTION Guide

Obtain strategies for healthier eating habits, stress management, and/or starting a personal exercise program...for a free personal consult contact Schiffert Health Center's Office of Health Education at 231-3070 or e-mail <wellness.resource.center@vt.edu>.

Recreational Sports

For more information on fitness class packages, personal training, cholesterol screening and/or intramural activities including sports, aquatics, and more visit 142 McComas Hall or contact Recreational Sports at 231-6856.

Smoking Cessation Counseling & Quit Kits

Learn strategies and pick up resources to help you Live Smoke Free. For a free smoking cessation counseling session call 231-6444. For a free Quit Kit stop by Wellness Resource Center, 141 McComas Hall.

Dietary Assistance

Are you gaining weight and can't stop? Are you tired all the time? Are your eating habits erratic and unbalanced? Do you have food allergies? Do you have special health concerns such as diabetes or high blood pressure? If you answered yes to any of these questions, call 231-5313 for a free appointment with the Schiffert Health Center Dietitian.

Wellness Resource Gallery

Do you have questions about your fitness level? Do you want to find information about how to quit smoking, reduce blood pressure or deal with high stress levels? Are you looking for ways to incorporate better nutrition into your lifestyle? Visit the *Wellness Gallery*, a self-help room including health assessments, personal action plan guides, helpful handouts, pamphlets, videos, CDs, tapes and more! Check it out alone or with a friend. Where? In the Lobby of the Cook Counseling Center on the second floor of McComas Hall.

HNFE Nutrition Counseling

Do you have concerns with any of the following issues? Improving your food choices at the store or dining hall; cooking in your apartment for the first time; weight management; nutrition and exercise; nutrition and women's issues; nutrition for disease prevention. Free unlimited sessions available- Contact HNFE Dept. at 231-4672 or e-mail: <nutrihelp@vt.edu>.

EXERCISE YOUR STRESS AWAY!

**STRESSED OUT?!
MAYBE EXERCISE IS THE ANSWER!!**

Why exercise?

⊃♥⊂ Exercise is a way to alleviate the harmful effects of stress and help control it by inducing beneficial stress on the body.

⊃♥⊂ Exercise increases blood flow to the entire body, thus relaxing tense muscles, strengthening the immune system, heart, and lungs, and releasing endorphins in the brain.

Besides reducing stress, what are other potential benefits of exercise?

⊃♥⊂ Improves physical appearance, self-esteem, and self-confidence, helping to reduce the stresses of social acceptance

⊃♥⊂ More energy, greater concentration, and better quality of sleep

⊃♥⊂ Exercisers are less likely to get sick after stressful situations than non-exercisers

⊃♥⊂ Helps protect against the physical effects of daily stress, by providing a "time out"

⊃♥⊂ Any amount of activity has both mental and physical benefits

A few thing to remember:

⊃♥⊂ Schedule exercise sessions as you would any important meeting or commitment

⊃♥⊂ Do not let a crowded gym or fitness class cause you anxiety; talk to a gym trainer about a personal orientation to the facilities and machines

⊃♥⊂ Remember to make exercise fun and interesting by doing activities you enjoy

*Heather Schaeerer,
Hokie AquaWalk Club Coordinator*

Reference:
<http://www.businesslife.com>
<http://www.mindtools.com>
<http://www.fitrex.com>

FIVE-MINUTE STRESS BUSTER #1

Stretching. Sit in a chair with your upper body resting forward on your lap. Slowly roll up, starting at the base of your spine, until your back is straight. Stretch neck muscles by tilting your head to the right and slowly rolling your head down and to the left. Repeat a few times in both directions.

DON'T BE A MESS, MANAGE YOUR STRESS!

SOME HEALTHFUL HINTS TO REDUCE STRESS:

🕒 **Learn to relax.** Throughout the day, take "mini-breaks."

🕒 **Practice acceptance.** Many people get distressed over things they won't let themselves accept. Often these are things that can't be changed, like someone else's feelings or beliefs.

🕒 **Talk rationally to yourself.** Think through whether the situation that is causing you stress is your problem or someone else's. If it is yours, approach it calmly and firmly; if it is another's, let it go.

🕒 **Get organized.** Develop a realistic schedule of daily activities that includes adequate time for work, sleep, relationships, and recreation. Use a daily "things to do" list.

🕒 **Exercise.** We need to develop a regular exercise program to help reduce the effects of stress. Try aerobics, walking, jogging, dancing, swimming, and the like.

🕒 **Reduce time urgency.** Plan your schedule ahead of time. Recognize that you can only do so much in a given period of time and don't try to do more than that.

🕒 **Disarm yourself.** Adjust your approach to an event according to its demands.

🕒 **Quiet time.** Unwind by taking a quiet stroll, soaking in a hot bath, watching a sunset, or listening to calming music.

🕒 **Watch your habits.** Eat sensibly, watch your intake of caffeine and sugar, and cut down on cigarette smoking.

🕒 **Talk to friends.** Daily doses of conversation, regular social engagements, etc. can reduce stress quite nicely.

🕒 **Sleep.** Get at least eight hours of sleep per night as often as you can.

For more info: visit the Wellness Gallery located in the lobby of the Cook Counseling Center (2nd Floor McComas Hall)

*Liz Allen,
Wellness Peer Educator*

Reference:
<http://www.psychwww.com/mts/site.smpage.html>



Eu-stressed? Di-stressed? DE-STRESS!

When we speak of stress, most of us think of it negatively. Good news! Not all stress is detrimental, and there are ways to deal with its harmful effects.

Eustress: What is it?

- ☞ Positive stress
- ☞ Has positive effects by keeping us alert and motivated
- ☞ The right amount of eustress can make some people feel more alive

Examples

- ☞ What a runner feels before a race
- ☞ How a project leader feels before a deadline

Adrenaline: What is it?

- ☞ A hormone produced when the body is under stress
- ☞ Necessary for survival
- ☞ Certain amounts make us feel good
- ☞ An adrenaline rush (small bursts of adrenaline) helps people perform their best
- ☞ Plays a role in achieving goals

Distress: What is it?

- ☞ Harmful stress
- ☞ Occurs when stress gets out of hand
- ☞ Consistently high levels of adrenaline

How can distress affect a person's health?

- ☞ **Physically** - muscle tension, high blood pressure, insomnia, loss of appetite, shortness of breath, upset stomach, teeth grinding, cold or sweaty hands.
- ☞ **Behaviorally** - insomnia or too much sleep, unexplained crying, fidgeting, forgetfulness
- ☞ **Emotionally** - depression, irritability, anxiety, impatience

Examples of things that cause distress:

- ☞ Illness or injury
- ☞ Death of someone close

Long-term De-Stressors:

- ☞ Become aware of your stressors and emotional, behavioral, and physical reactions. Notice your distress, don't ignore it or gloss over your problems.
- ☞ Recognize what you can change. Can you change your stressors by avoiding or eliminating them completely?
- ☞ Reduce the intensity of your emotional reactions to stress. Ask yourself or a friend if you are viewing your stressors in exaggerated terms and/or taking a difficult situation and making it a disaster.
- ☞ Learn to moderate your physical reactions to stress. Slow, deep breathing will bring your heart rate and respiration back to normal.

Make an appointment at the Cook Counseling Center for more personalized de-stressors

Amanda Hines,
Health Promotion Team

Reference:
<http://www.ivf.com/stress.html>

YOGA

Yoga is a wonderful exercise that couples mindful breathing with extensive stretching and strength poses to help relax and reduce stress.

What are some benefits of yoga?

- ☞ Improves flexibility
- ☞ Stress and blood pressure reduction
- ☞ Provides a better sense of well being
- ☞ Strengthens, sculpts, and builds muscles especially in the upper body
- ☞ Helps relieve muscle tightness and stiffness
- ☞ Makes you less susceptible to injury
- ☞ Decreases anxiety levels
- ☞ Improves coordination, concentration, sleep, and digestion
- ☞ Is good therapy for various medical conditions



Who benefits from yoga?

- ☞ Runners
- ☞ Cross trainers
- ☞ Aerobics participants
- ☞ People of all ages and fitness levels

Regardless of your fitness level, whether you are looking to gain strength, flexibility, or a more relaxed state of mind, try a yoga class. **Power Yoga** by Beryl Bender Birch is a wonderful book for beginners.

For more information about the Yoga classes offered at Virginia Tech, stop by 142 McComas Hall or call 231-6856.

Amy Kitts,
Aerobics Instructor

FIVE-MINUTE STRESS BUSTER #2

Meditation. Close your eyes and mentally follow your breathing. As you exhale, mentally repeat a simple or soothing word with each breath. Or visualize a peaceful scene. Do this for at least five minutes or, for more benefit, up to 30 minutes.

BREATHE TO RELIEVE!

Did you know that 75% of all doctors' visits are directly or indirectly related to stress? Stress is your body's response to things that happen to you. High stress life-styles may put a person at a greater risk for heart disease, artery blockage, high blood pressure, and even cancer.

One way to fight stress is with relaxation. Many health / fitness classes incorporate relaxation into each session. Techniques utilizing both mental and physical exercises are used to relieve tension.

New breathing technique

- ☞ Can be very relaxing
- ☞ Many health / fitness classes take advantage of modern technology by showing

abstract images on a screen to aid in breathing techniques and overall relaxation.

☞ Images may include an object that moves forward and back, guiding one's inhalation and exhalation or it may just be a still image of a stress free environment.

☞ By focusing on this image, one's mind automatically shifts gears into a more relaxed and receptive state.

☞ The image is designed to move one's thoughts from thinking about the past or future to simply experiencing the "now".

☞ These sessions can bring about a healthy state of relaxation in which the heart rate, respiration rate, and stress hormone levels decrease.

Liz McNally,
Aerobics Instructor
Reference:
<http://www.timedoctor.com>

DON'T LET YOUR DAYS TICK AWAY... TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS

☞ **Plan enough time for study.** It is recommended that students spend two hours of studying for each hour spent in the classroom.

☞ **Study at the same time every day.** Get in the habit of having regular hours of study at least five days a week.

☞ **Make use of free hours during the day.** The hours between classes are perhaps a student's most valuable study time, and ironically the most frequently mis-used. Try utilizing this time better by studying.



☞ **Plan study periods to follow class periods.** The next best procedure is to schedule time for study immediately preceding a class and following a class.

☞ **Space study periods.** Fifty to ninety minutes of study at a time for each course works best. Relax in between for ten to fifteen minutes.

☞ **Plan for weekly reviews.** Allow one hour each week for each class to be reviewed.

☞ **Leave some unscheduled time for flexibility.** Lack of flexibility is the major reason why schedules fail.

☞ **Allot time for planned fun-time.** This is important so that you remember to balance your schoolwork with hobbies, social engagements, and other interests.

For more information visit the Wellness Gallery located in the Cook Counseling Center

Check out Relaxation Classes offered in Rm. 258 Cook Counseling Center every Thursday 1-2 PM, no pre-registration necessary, just show up!

Liz Allen,
Wellness Peer Educator

Reference:
<http://www.yorku.ca/admin/cdc/lsp/tm/time.htm>

CHILL OUT, DON'T BURN OUT!

Have you ever felt seriously stressed and unable to cope with daily activities? If so, you may be experiencing "Burnout", a term often used to define this feeling. Here you can find a couple tips on how to avoid burnout!



Causes:

- ☛ Most often seen in people who feel overworked and unappreciated.
- ☛ Anyone doing very pressured work can suffer from burnout.

Symptoms:

- ☛ Exhaustion, both mental and physical.
- ☛ Hopelessness and Helplessness
- ☛ Low spirit and self-esteem
- ☛ Frequent illness

Recognizing the problem:

- ☞ Define the problem.
- ☞ Is the situation itself stressful?
- ☞ Can you change anything about the situation?
- ☞ Accepting the situation as being stressful will reduce feelings of resentment.

Making Changes:

- ☞ Changes in both you and your environment can help prevent burnout.
- ☞ Analyze the situation.
- ☞ Take positive action if possible
- ☞ Share your feelings and listen to others.
- ☞ Take time to recover and heal from burnout, otherwise serious emotional and physical damage may result.
- ☞ Ask someone you respect to look at your situation and suggest solutions.

If you feel like you are experiencing some of these symptoms, you may want to consider talking with someone at the Cook Counseling Center. They can help you find an approach to avoid or bounce back from burn out!

*Valerie Biringier,
Health Promotion Team*

Reference:

<http://www.aomc.org/HOD2/general/stress-BURNOUT.html>

FIVE-MINUTE STRESS BUSTER #3

Self-Massage. sit with your shoulders relaxed. Use your right hand to massage your left shoulder and neck, working your way up to the scalp. Repeat, using the left hand for the right shoulder.

STRESS FRACTURES

What is a stress fracture?

☛ An incomplete fracture caused by excessive stress to (or overuse of) a bone

How are stress fractures caused?

☛ Rhythmic muscle actions performed over a period of time causes the stress-bearing

capacity of a bone to be exceeded

☛ Stress fractures occur gradually over time

Where do stress fractures usually occur?

- ☛ In the lower leg and foot
- ☛ Other common sites are the upper leg, heel, ribs, and upper arm

Signs & Symptoms:

- ☛ Swelling
- ☛ Affected area is always tender to the touch
- ☛ Pain

- ☉ Usually directly over the affected bone
- ☉ Possibly sharp and radiating
- ☉ Initially pain is experienced during activity
- ☉ Over time, pain is constant and intense during activity and rest

Stress fractures are common in the following situations:

- ☛ Returning to exercise too soon after an injury or illness
- ☛ Going from one event to another without proper training in the second event
- ☛ Starting initial training too quickly
- ☛ Changing habits/environment (e.g. running surfaces or shoes)

Treatment:

- ☛ Please seek medical attention
- ☛ Failure to do so could result in a complete fracture

Medical Services are available to students at
Schiffert Health Center

*Serah Mott,
Athletic Trainer*

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Progressive muscle relaxation is a systematic technique for achieving a deep state of relaxation.

How to do it:

- ✓ It involves tensing and relaxing different muscle groups.
- ✓ The idea is to tense each muscle group hard (not so hard that you strain, however) for about 10 seconds, and then to let go of it suddenly.
- ✓ Give yourself 15-20 seconds to relax, noticing how the muscle group feels when relaxed in contrast to how it felt when tensed.

Why do it?:

- ☛ By tensing and releasing various muscle groups throughout the body, anxiety associated with muscle tension is greatly reduced.
- ☛ The entire sequence should take about 20-30 minutes the first time, with time decreasing as you become more familiar with the technique.
- ☛ Regular practice of progressive muscle relaxation can go a long way towards helping

you better manage your anxiety, face your fears, overcome panic, and feel better all around.

☛ Progressive muscle relaxation is especially helpful for people whose anxiety is strongly associated with muscle tension.

☛ The entire process is described in detail on <http://www.mccg.org/challenge/how.htm>.

*Ashley Liu,
Aerobics Instructor*

FIVE-MINUTE STRESS BUSTER #4

Deep Breathing. Inhale deeply, feeling your stomach expand. Hold your breath for a few seconds, then slowly exhale, visualizing tension leaving your body.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT... EVEN DURING EXAM WEEK!

Calming Foods:

To help settle those jitters...

☛ **Milk**—contains morphine-like substances

☛ **Mashed potatoes and breads**—comfort foods

Beware of food that will wind you up:

☛ **Sugars**; this includes soda and sweets
—May give an instant "energy hit", but that's at the cost of making you even more nervy than you were before.

Avoid the late-night Gumby's call

—If you must, try to limit your intake, and order a pizza with lots of veggies.

Try to keep healthy snacks around:

☛ **Fresh, cut veggies with dip**—the crunch will relieve some of that stress, while also providing your body with the nutrients it requires

☛ **Low-fat chocolate milk and granola bars**
—to kill your sweet cravings

☛ **Light popcorn**—a great "social" snack during study breaks

The BIG Picture: during heavy physiological stress our need for proteins, vitamins and minerals remains about normal. But because eating habits tend to go berserk, we may not get all the nutrition we need to handle the extra load. With a little nutrition thought you can keep your mind and body healthy during exam week!

*Erin Silvoy,
Wellness Peer Educator*

References:

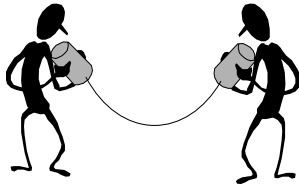
<http://www.healthgate.com>
<http://www.onhealth.webmd.com>

**Pressures of College Life
and Managing DIABETES**

You are invited to attend
an Ongoing Education and Support Group

*When: Thursday, December 7th and January 18
4:00-5:00 PM.*

*Where: Virginia Tech, McComas Hall
Cook Counseling Center, Meeting Room 258*



TOPICS

December 7- Blood Glucose Monitoring

January 18 - Nutrition Labeling, Carbohydrate Counting

Sponsored by Schiffert Health Center

E-mail Questions to <srob@vt.edu>

No registration needed

Thank You

**Newsletter
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