

“ I have always liked to play sports like rugby and I can be very competitive. I have learnt that there is such a thing as a ‘good’ amount of stress. Some stress is good because it gets my adrenaline going, which motivates me. However, I have also learnt that too much stress is bad and decreases my performance. It is really important to find the right balance or strength to reach optimum performance level. ”

“ I recommend using methods to manage stress and keep it under control. I enjoy one-minute meditations, the Clear Fear app, and breathing exercises. ”

“ I have tried different stress management techniques but the Take5 one is so good and easy. I have used it in lots of situations, thank you :) ”



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## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Hub of Hope

Search for mental health support in your area.

Website: [www.hubofhope.co.uk](http://www.hubofhope.co.uk)

### Childline

Counselling service for children and young people. Phone, talk to a counsellor online, send Childline an email or post on the message boards.

Helpline: **0800 1111** (24/7)

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### YoungMinds

Information for both parents and young people on child and adolescent mental health.

Website: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

### SHOUT

Free, confidential, anonymous text support service.

Text ‘SHOUT’ to **85258** (24/7)

Website: [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org)

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**stem4**  
supporting teenage mental health  
Registered Charity No. 1144506

# STRESS



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# STRESS

## Key facts:

Stress is the body's reaction to a challenge. Depending on how you perceive this challenge, stress can be experienced as 'good' or 'bad'.

## For example:

- When you are about to go on the rugby pitch, you may feel stressed, but this type of stress will make you sharper and increase your performance.
- When you are exhausted and have left lots of homework to the last minute, you may feel stressed, and this will decrease your performance.

## How do I know if I'm stressed?

- Are you feeling more irritable or angry than normal?
- Do you feel agitated?
- Are you having difficulty sleeping?
- Are you making more mistakes?
- Have you become absent-minded or forgetful?
- Are you constantly tense and on the go?
- Have you experienced any unusual physical symptoms such as aches and pains, nausea, or felt unusually tense?
- Do you find yourself not enjoying time spent with friends?

More 'yes' answers may indicate higher rates of stress that could affect you negatively.



## Why deal with stress?

Reducing stress is essential in maintaining overall health. It can help boost immunity, reduce the probability of triggering the start of stomach, skin, or heart related problems, and help manage mood. Being stressed around people can often negatively affect relationships. Overly increased stress can also negatively affect your performance. For example, how you feel before an exam.

## What can I try to do?

- Boost your body's reaction to challenges by eating a balanced diet and by eating regularly. Have sensible amounts of stimulants such as caffeine, and have moderate amounts of sugar.
- Have a minimum of 8 hours of sleep a night.
- Start a diary to note what triggers your stress.
- Practicing controlled breathing often helps to calm you. Breathe in for a count of five, hold for two, and breathe out for a count of seven.
- Make sure you build in some breaks and times to relax during the day.
- Manage your time effectively.
- Work on not taking on too much. Learn to say no if you can't do something.
- Have a lot of work? Draw up a plan of how you are going to manage it and decide on which work requires the most immediate action.
- On a short fuse? Tense and relax your body a few times, breathing out your anger or irritability.
- Exercise regularly, for half an hour, five times a week.
- Work on developing a positive mindset. Can you change something you find worrying into a challenge?
- Talk to someone you trust about your symptoms and how they are affecting you.

- Visit your GP by phoning your local practice and booking an appointment (check if you can book it with their mental health lead). Go ready to discuss your concerns and the problems you are experiencing. You can always take your diary with you in order to help this process. If you have a lot to discuss, book a double appointment.

## Clear Fear

Why not try the stem4 Clear Fear app?

Clear Fear is an app to help young people manage the symptoms of anxiety, developed by a clinician in collaboration with young people.

The Clear Fear app uses evidence-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

It is FREE to download from the Apple Store and Google Play.



## Asking for help

stem4 has an Asking for help booklet available on our Resources page [www.stem4.org.uk/resources](http://www.stem4.org.uk/resources)



## Take5

Try stem4's Take5 Controlled Breathing exercise.

