



Safety Topic

Mental Health Awareness: Effective Stress Management

Stress is the physical and/or mental response to an external cause. Long hours, physically demanding work and job hazards can contribute to stress. Learning to manage stress effectively is crucial for maintaining a healthy and balanced life.

SIGNS OF STRESS

Recognizing signs and symptoms of stress is the first step to managing it. Stress can show up in various ways, including:

- Higher blood pressure.
- Increased illnesses.
- Headaches or body pain.
- Clouded judgment.
- Impaired memory.
- Disrupted sleep.

WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS

Talk About It — Increasing the awareness of stress is critical. Studies show construction workers are less likely to talk about or seek help for mental health issues because they fear being judged as weak. One person can make a difference by openly discussing their mental health and encouraging others to do the same.

Develop Awareness — Journal or keep a stress tracker to log stress triggers, physical sensations and stress levels. Awareness helps identify patterns and early warning signs, allowing for proactive stress management.

Prioritize Exercise, Diet and Sleep — Regular exercise and eating healthy, regular meals can reduce stress symptoms. Sticking to a sleep routine and getting enough sleep also help manage stress.

Try Progressive Muscle Relaxation — PMR is a technique to address the physical symptoms of stress. To practice PMR, focus on and tense a muscle group for a few seconds, then release. Work through all the major muscle groups, going up or down through the body.

Seek Mental Health Services — Mental health services and support groups can provide valuable help and strategies for managing stress.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The National Institute of Mental Health lists additional valuable resources at www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help.

Call 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

