

# Stressed Out!

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**Stress** is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response.

Right now, everyone is feeling more stress than they are used to. Taking care of yourself as a parent, grandparent, caregiver, now is more important than ever.

Fortunately, there are many ways to help relieve stress, and in this series we will provide hints, tips & resources to help you and your family learn ways to reduce stress!

## Quick & Easy Stress Relievers

Here are a few quick stress relievers you can do anywhere- at home, in the car, at your desk, etc:

- Chew Gum
- Deep Breaths- in through your nose & out through your mouth
- Talk to Yourself- tell yourself you can do it, one thing at a time, etc.
- Listen to Calming or Uplifting Music, and Sing Along!
- Squeeze a Stress Ball
- Give Yourself a Neck or Hand Massage

## Too much stress?

If any of these signs/symptoms have become a regular/daily part of your life, it may be time to seek professional help:

- Headaches
- Chest pain/Rapid heart rate
- Difficulty Sleeping
- Irritable (You're always in a bad mood)
- Overeating or Undereating
- Not Feeling Well
- Upset Stomach/Digestive Issues

There is nothing wrong w/ asking for help sometimes! Especially if it will help you to be the best parent you can be!!

## Bottom Line: Stress

Stress is something all of us will experience at one point or another. Right now, during these difficult times, many of us are feeling more stress than usual.

Stress can take a toll on many aspects of your health & wellbeing, and can produce a wide range of symptoms, which will differ from person to person. Knowing when to seek professional help will be an individual decision based on you and your family's needs and preferences.

## Professional Help

When you feel you (or a family member) is experiencing too much stress and you want to seek professional help, there are many options available.

Deciding what is best will be a decision you can make based on you and your family's preferences, needs, current situation and comfort.

### Options:

- Speak w/ your **Primary Care Physician (PCP)**- they can identify any underlying medical issues and recommend lifestyle changes or make a referral to a Psychiatrist or therapist based on your individual symptoms and preferences.

- **Outpatient Therapy**- with outpatient therapy you would go to an office or clinic and speak with a licensed therapist typically once weekly for approximately half hour to an hour. Who you can see will be based on the type of insurance you have. In order to find out who can take your insurance you can call your insurance company directly (the number on the back of your insurance card) or call a local office or clinic and they will assist you with finding a therapist.

- Psychiatrist vs Psychologist

**Psychiatrist**- is a trained, licensed medical doctor. Psychiatrists prescribe medications & focus on medication management as a course of treatment. Most psychiatrists will require you to see a therapist as part of your treatment if they are prescribing medications for any mental health issue- requirements will vary with each individual provider.

**Psychologist**- has a Doctoral Degree, typically in Psychology and cannot prescribe medication. They provide psychological evaluations or testing in order to diagnose mental health disorders. Psychologists focus on psychosocial therapy and can make referrals to the appropriate resources within your community to address your current needs based on their evaluation.

A list of local psychologists and their contact information:

<https://s18637.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/Beaver-County-Independent-Evaluator-Directory.pdf>

A comprehensive list of behavioral health providers and their contact information:

<http://www.bcsystemofcare.org/documents/BCBH%20Provider%20Listing.pdf>

### Additional Resources:

While this series is focused on hints, tips & resources for parents/caregivers it is important to be aware of how your stress can affect other family members.

“Stressed out? Your kids may be too.” This article provides recommendations on how to avoid “spreading” stress: <https://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/stressed-kids#1>

How Your Stress Affects Your Kids:

<https://www.webmd.com/parenting/raising-fit-kids/mood/features/how-stress-affects-kids#2>