

FACES NEWSLETTER

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7 Ways Exercise Relieves Stress

Robin T. Seitz
Extension Agent,
Family & Consumer
Science

Are you a self-confessed "stress-pot"? It's not an easy admission to make, simply because we all hate being stressed. And knowing we stress over little things, stresses us out even more.

Peggie L. Garner
County Extension
Director

Without exercise, I'd be locked at home, brimming with stress and depression. I know because I've been there. It's something you only notice if exercise is a central part of your being.

Most people I know who workout regularly say that they use exercise to manage their stress--as well as to look better, be healthier and all the rest.

Contact Us:

NCCE-Onslow County
4024 Richlands Hwy.
Jacksonville, NC
28540

It seems that if exercise isn't a part of your life, you might be at a disadvantage when it comes to daily stressful situations. By starting to exercise, you can learn to stress less.

That may not be the case for everyone and there are other ways to cope with stress, but for me, exercise is the most natural, effective and cheap coping mechanism. Exercise and stress are closely related.

(910) 455-5873
(910) 455-0977 Fax
<http://onslow.ces.ncsu.edu>

How Does Exercise Relieve Stress?

If you don't have a very active lifestyle, and often feel strangled by stress and depression, you may want to take note.

Here are the main ways exercise and stress are connected:

Body Systems

When stressed, each of your body systems (cardiovascular, nervous, respiratory, muscular etc.) need to interact efficiently for you to respond well. Exercise helps your body systems practice interacting with each other, in a healthy way. This directly leads to a better overall response to stress.

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Endorphins

These are your natural painkillers that give you a "high". Although more research is needed, there's no doubt that long periods of moderate to high intensity exercise, does have a happy affect on your emotions.

Fight or Flight

This is your natural reaction to any stressful situation. The problem is that much of today's stress doesn't require either physical fighting or running. But your body still provides the chemicals for it, which can be harmful if they remain. The best and most logical way to clear the chemicals is to actually do some exercise.

Rhythm and Flow

Some exercise, like running and cycling, lets you get into a rhythm. That rhythmic flow of a repeat action relaxes your mind. It's a bit like focusing on nothing and everything at the same time. It's your time. Just make sure you keep an eye on where you're going!

Socialize

Any sport or exercise with friends, gives you the chance to socialize, that you may not normally get. "Having a laugh" with friends is more than just fun. It gives you a chance to share your problems, and know that someone is there if you need them.

Better Sleep

Lack of sleep often leads to a vicious cycle. You become more stressed and anxious during the day, which means it's even harder to sleep at night. Exercise not only helps break that cycle, but can lead to a positive cycle instead. When you sleep well, you'll have more energy in the day and be more productive.

Organize your Life

Stress is often caused by a lack of organization and planning, whether it's in your work life or home life. Following a workout plan, where you set yourself goals and ultimately have a sense of achievement, will help you transfer those skills to the rest of your life.

Stress Busting Exercises

When it comes down to it, any exercise is better than none. Don't worry about which exercise is the best for others, focus on yourself and what you enjoy. If you're not sure, then try different things out. Here are some more tips to exercise and stress less:

- **Mix up your exercise.** It depends on your goals (burn fat, improve fitness, build muscle etc.), but including a mix of, for example, aerobic, interval and circuit exercises will benefit you the most overall, when dealing with stress.
- **Adapt your exercise to your type of stress.** If you tend to feel out of control, try rhythmic exercise (as described above - running, swimming, cycling etc.) and some yoga or Pilates to focus your energy. If you tend to feel angry and aggressive, try combat exercise like martial arts or boxing.
- **Make the first move.** I know it's hard when you're stressed out, depressed and don't feel like moving a muscle. The problem is, things will just feel worse if you don't. So, however small it is, make that first move. It could literally be putting on your

exercise shoes and going for a walk. Build from there.

- **Take it easy.** If you're just getting started with exercise, go slow. If you have any concerns, see your health professional first. There's no point jumping in headfirst if you pick up an injury.

Final Word

Now you know the many connections between exercise and stress. The facts are hard to ignore, try doing some exercise today and see if it makes a difference.

If you know anyone who always seems to be stressed or short-tempered, let him or her know about exercise and stress. You can't force anyone to do anything, but you can point him or her in the right direction

Watermelon, the Wonder Fruit

From *The Produce Lady E-Newsletter*

One of the most wonderful fruits of summer is the watermelon. You can find these sweet, seasonal melons at just about every farmers market and roadside stand across North Carolina from now into September. A nutritious and delicious favorite, watermelons will have your mouth watering!

SELECTION

- Follow your eyes to a melon with a full, symmetrical shape that's firm and free from bruises, cuts or dents.
- A juicy watermelon will be heavy for its size; the fruit is 92 percent water. If you must, thump the melon and listen for a dull hollow sound.

- Look for a pale yellow patch on the underside, which means the melon sat on the ground and naturally ripened in the sun.

NUTRITION

- Contains no fat or cholesterol and few calories (80 per serving).
- Serves as an excellent source of fiber, potassium and vitamins A and C.
- Boasts higher amounts of cancer-fighting lycopene – the pigment that gives watermelon its red color – than any other fruit or vegetable.

MAKING THE MOST OF SUMMER'S MELONS

There's nothing like a fresh-cut slice of watermelon on the rind, with the sweet juices streaming down your face after every bite, but you'd be remiss to think that's the only way to enjoy watermelon. If you want some variety, try these ideas:

An unconventional way to prepare watermelon is grilling – and it will impress guests during your next cookout or get-together. Simply brush with a combination of lime, honey and your favorite chili sauce. It's sweet and savory – find the recipe below.

Combine chunks of watermelon with sprite melon, cantaloupe and honeydew to make a delicious melon medley. Try combining a variety of melon slices with other seasonal fruits, like blueberries and peaches, in a fruit salad or a refreshing smoothie. Or a slush like the one below.

To keep those melons fresh and safe:

- Keep cut melon at room temperature for no more than 2 hours.
- Refrigerate leftover melon in a sealed container for no more than 3 to 4 days.
- Uncut melons will keep for seven to 10

days at room temperature, but be careful not to store it too long or it will lose its flavor.

Try these wonderful watermelon recipes this summer.

Grilled Watermelon

- Watermelon
- Lime juice
- Honey
- Chili Sauce

Slice watermelon into 1-1/2 inch wedges. Brush melon with a combination of lime, honey and your favorite chili sauce. Grill on high heat for 5 minutes on each side or until grill marks are visible.

Sweet Watermelon Dip Sticks

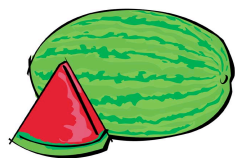
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 4 tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Watermelon, cut into strips

Mix together sour cream, honey and vanilla extract in a small bowl. Use as dipping sauce for watermelon sticks.

Tangy Watermelon Slush

- 4 cups watermelon, pureed and strained
- 4 cups ice cubes
- 2/3 cup frozen lemonade or limeade concentrate
- 1 cup cold water

Puree watermelon in a blender. On medium speed, blend together watermelon, ice, lemonade/limeade concentrate and water until ice breaks down. Pour into glasses and enjoy! Serves 6.



Basics for Frugal and Green Cleaning

Back in January, I started trying some techniques for “Frugal and Green Cleaning”. At first I was overwhelmed about where to start, and about what products to use and where. Six months later and my experiment is still going strong. I’m happy to report I’ve learned a lot and now plan of doing a series of articles to share with you the things I’ve learned. I’ll begin with some basics about the homemade green cleaners I now use.

The thing I love the most about homemade, green cleaners is how simplified my cleaning cupboard, and my cleaning routine in general, has become.

When I began I was delighted to learn that I didn’t have to make a dozen different cleaners. I no longer need separate cleaners for each different job, and each different room - kitchen cleaner, floor cleaner, bathroom cleaner, tub & tile cleaner, toilet bowl cleaner, window cleaner, dusting spray, multipurpose cleaner - these were all soon replaced by a few basic products that I already had in my kitchen pantry or somewhere around my home.

To create simple, green, and frugal cleaning products, I have found that the following 4 items are the ones that I use the most, are the most multi-tasking, and the best performing.

White Vinegar

This is probably the most frugal and versatile non-toxic cleaner. It is a safe and natural disinfectant that, mixed in a 1/1 ratio with water, can clean everything from floor to ceiling in pretty much any room, including mirrors and window. You should not, however, use vinegar on porous natural surfaces like marble or granite.

I use vinegar to clean my kitchen counter and floors, and wipe down cabinets, **it's great at cutting grease**. I also use it to clean my bathroom, it's especially good at cleaning up stainless steel fixtures and making them shiny. The vinegar and water mixture is also works as a stain remover on carpets and rugs!

Some people have a hard time with the smell of vinegar. I find that the scent disperses pretty quickly, especially with a fan or window open. But, you can also try adding essential oils to your vinegar and water mixture to achieve a scent that you can live with, and maybe even enjoy!

You can also use vinegar in the rinse aid compartment of your dishwasher instead of a commercial brand like Jet Dry. It helps to keep residue off dishes and keep them spot free.

Vinegar is also a great replacement for fabric softener in you laundry. This is one I learned while cloth diapering my

youngest daughter, Olivia.

Commercial fabric softeners are very bad for the cloth diapers causing them to repel, rather than absorb, fluid. So I'd just add vinegar to the fabric softener dispenser, or filled an old Downy ball with vinegar. While it doesn't leave a scent like store-bought fabric softener does, it does help to repel static cling, and I have learned that I like the smell of just plain clean, and that artificial scents are actually irritating to me now.

Baking Soda

This is an essential replacement for abrasive cleaners like Comet. So that it is easily accessible for cleaning, I suggest that you either invest in a shakeable container to keep it in, or reuse something you already have like an old Parmesan cheese container. Use the baking soda alone, or make a paste by mixing it with water, it is great for scrubbing off all different types of surfaces.

I pretty much exclusively use Baking Soda **to clean my toilets**. Just a few shakes around the bowl and a good scrubbing with a toilet brush and we're good to go. It's also great for scrubbing off burned on food on my glass top stove, cleaning and whitening my white enamel kitchen sink.

Sprinkle baking soda on your rug or carpet and wait a few minutes and then vacuum it up for a natural freshener and deodorizer.

This is especially nice if you add a few drops of essential oil to your baking soda, it adds a lovely scent to your home as you vacuum.

Hydrogen Peroxide

Hydrogen Peroxide is **great for cleaning areas that you want to be disinfected**. It breaks down when exposed to light, so it's best kept in an opaque bottle. I leave mine in it's original bottle and add a spray nozzle from a cheap dollar store spray bottle. You can mix hydrogen peroxide 1/1 with water to stretch it even further. Spray down surfaces in the kitchen and bathroom with hydrogen peroxide **to disinfect and kill germs**. It's not a great cleaner in the world as far as actually scrubbing and cleaning, but I like to use it on my kitchen counters after I have already cleaned them, just to make sure they are disinfected.

The mix of hydrogen peroxide and water also is great at removing certain types of stains on clothing. Dark stains, like blood, blueberries or other berries, or juice, come out when you spray them before putting the clothing in the wash.

Castile Soap

Castile Soap has many uses for both cleaning and as a personal care product. **Along with tea tree oil and water, it makes up my favorite homemade multipurpose cleaner**. Just add water to a spray bottle and add a

few squirts of castile soap and a few drops of tea tree oil and you have another great multi-tasking cleaner for all around the home. This multipurpose cleaner is a great alternative if you don't like the smell of vinegar, because it is just as versatile.

I have to mention one more product that finds it way into several of my homemade cleaning products, so **an Honorable Mention goes to Tea Tree Oil**. TTO is a natural antiseptic and disinfectant and is great to add to homemade multi-purpose cleaners.

Using wireless technology before, during and after emergencies

As consumers increasingly rely on mobile phones and smartphones, these technologies are becoming vital tools for dealing with an emergency. Approximately 70 percent of 911 calls are placed from a mobile phone and 74 percent of consumers have used a mobile phone in an emergency. According to one recent study, 19 percent of consumers had used their mobile phone to get help in an emergency in the last 30 days.

New mobile technologies are giving consumers new choices and new tools they can use to be better prepared. AT&T* and Consumer Action are working together to educate the public about options for using wireless technologies in emergencies. "Emergencies strike when we least expect it, which is why being prepared is

so important,” said Ken McEldowney, executive director of Consumer Action. “Our goal is to increase consumer awareness about their options for using wireless technology to prepare for and respond to emergency situations.”

11 great ways your smartphone can work smarter in an emergency

Consumer Action and AT&T offer these tips on how you can use your mobile phone to prepare for and respond to emergencies:

1. **Be Prepared:** Use apps, such as [FEMA’s emergency preparedness app](#), to develop and implement emergency preparedness plans for your family, colleagues and loved ones.
2. **Stay Charged:** Use solar-powered and hand crank chargers and batteries. These chargers allow you to rely on your electronics and wireless devices even in a power outage.
3. **Stay Connected:** Use database and location-based apps to find loved ones during and after a disaster. Register yourself with the [American Red Cross “Safe and Well”](#) database and search for other loved ones that have registered to say they are okay. You can also use [AT&T FamilyMap](#), which provides peace of mind by enabling you to conveniently locate a family member from your wireless phone or PC and know that your family’s information is secure and private.
4. **Keep It in the Cloud:** Store your important documents, such as personal and financial records, in a password-protected area in the Cloud. New cloud services allow you to access your vital information anytime from anywhere with Internet access and to safely store your work where it’s not vulnerable to a damaged or left-behind computer.
5. **Get Help!** Consider downloading a smartphone global positioning satellite app. GPS phone trackers have the ability to deliver short messages and your GPS pinpoint location to a preferred list of contacts of your choosing in the event of an emergency.
6. **Use Quick Response (QR) Codes:** QR code technology can help first responders prevent misdiagnoses and adverse drug reactions in treatment of emergency victims.
7. **See & Be Seen/Send an SOS:** Use your smartphone as a flashlight when the power is down. There are flashlight apps for almost all smartphones (many of them are free) that use either your screen or camera flash to help you find what you need during a power outage—or help you to be found. Many flashlight apps even offer a Morse code SOS feature.
8. **Help Others:** Apps such as [Phone Aid](#) offer a series of quick educational and instructive “how to” slideshows designed to help jog your memory on skills such as administering CPR. It also shows basic first aid measures you may need to perform while you wait for emergency personnel to respond.

9. **Locate Resources:** Use mobile maps to find help and resources after a disaster. [American Red Cross: Shelter View](#) provides a searchable map of shelter locations by address, city, state and/or ZIP code and is updated every 30 minutes from the National Shelter System. It even includes the shelter capacity and how many residents are currently there.
10. **Stay Informed:** Create a list of Twitter handles to follow during a disaster. For example, the U.S. Geological Survey is currently studying how they can give better earthquake information via Twitter. Their official handle, @USGSted, tweets out information on occurrences of earthquakes with magnitudes of 5.5 or higher. They currently have a California-specific earthquake handle—@USGS_EQ_CA.

11. **Spread the Word:** Use social media and smartphone apps to help disseminate information about severe weather in real time and warn others. The [NOAA Now](#) app provides weather info from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including reports of hurricanes, tropical storms, mainland storms and tornado and severe thunderstorm alerts.

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North Carolina Cooperative Extension
North Carolina State University
Onslow County Center
4024 Richlands Highway
Jacksonville, North Carolina 28540
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