

Stress

DNA Health Report

REPORT CATEGORY —



Sample Client

Report date: 29 July 2025

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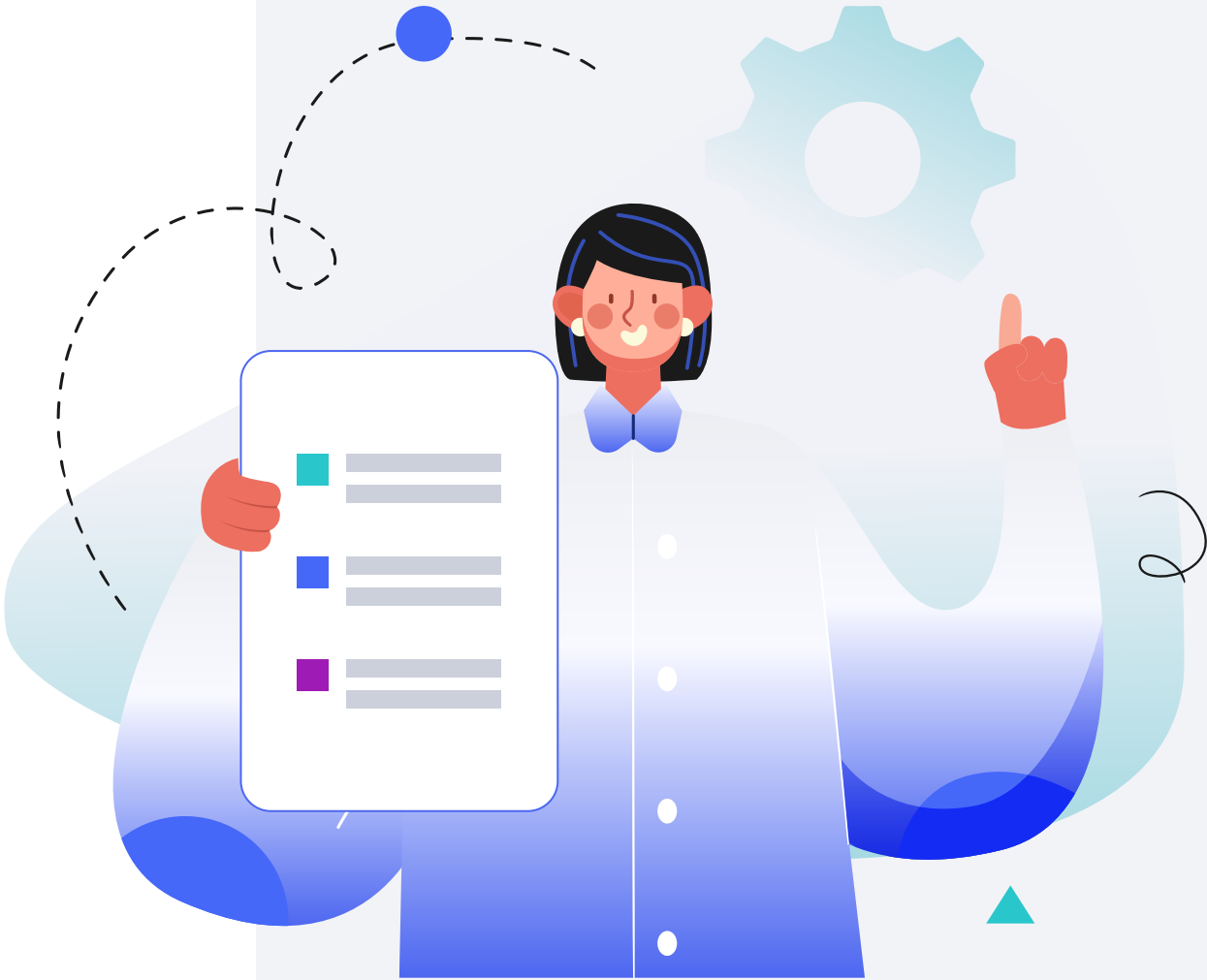
Your recommendations

Personal information

NAME	
Sample Client	
SEX AT BIRTH	
Male	
HEIGHT	
5ft 9"	175.0cm
WEIGHT	
165lb	75.0kg

DISCLAIMER

This report does not diagnose this or any other health conditions. Please talk to a healthcare professional if this condition runs in your family, you think you might have this condition, or you have any concerns about your results.



Introduction

Most people struggle to tell the difference between whether they’re stressed or anxious. If you’re stressed, your feelings will likely go away once the trigger passes. With anxiety, these feelings persist beyond the event and remain there even when there aren’t any external factors to cause you worry [\[R\]](#).

Unfortunately, life is full of stress-triggering events. From moving homes to changing jobs, it really is inevitable. This is why it’s so important to find coping strategies that work well for you.

One of the major influences over how well you cope with stress is your ability to think positively. Seeing the world through a positive lens has been linked to a lower risk of developing chronic stress. Better yet, positive thinking may also help stressed out individuals live longer [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#)!

But what are the secrets to positive thinking? Why do some people see things as “glass half-full” rather than “glass half-empty”?

Well, we don’t have an exact answer for that yet, but part of the reason lies in which [OPRM1](#) genetic variant you carry.

The *OPRM1* gene is part of your brain’s natural reward system. This system is responsible for why you feel good when you achieve something, and it ultimately helps motivate you to complete tasks in the future [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Certain variants of the *OPRM1* gene may alter the way OPRM1 works. One variant of this gene has actually been linked to how susceptible you are to stress [\[R\]](#).

But don’t worry, if you happen to carry a variant that increases your risk of stress, there are stress-busting activities you can do to fill your cup up!

Mindfulness meditation is a great example of this. Mindfulness involves focusing on your feelings and being acutely aware of your senses without judgement [\[R\]](#).

Individuals who carry one specific variant of the *OPRM1* gene may benefit from mindfulness more than others. Researchers found that by practicing mindfulness, those with the variant experienced significantly improved positive outlook compared to those without. And remember, a positive outlook shields you against stress and may even help you live longer [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Everyone’s built differently. Your genetics are why your stress-busting strategies may not work for another individual. That’s why it’s essential to know how your genes affect your ability to manage stress! Your DNA can help predict which strategies may work best for you, helping you to live a healthier and happier life.

This report focuses on the genetics of stress. Read more to find out:

- **The role of genetics in how you manage stress**
- **Your genetic risk score based on over 380,000 genetic variants**
- **Personalized recommendations based on your genetics**

About Stress

Key Takeaways:

- Up to **45%** of differences in people's stress levels may be due to genetics. It is a common issue that we all need to cope with at every age.
- Stress is highly modifiable by lifestyle and environment. So, a high genetic risk may be offset by effective stress reduction techniques and optimizing your health.
- Long-term or excessive stress may affect mental health, memory, heart, and gut health.
- Even with low genetic risk, you may want to take action now if you feel stressed out!
- Click the **next steps** tab for relevant labs.

Some people might tell you that stress is all in your head, but that's not true. **Stress is a whole-body reaction** [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Stress is managed by a network of brain regions, glands, and hormones. This network is called the *HPA axis* [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

The HPA axis makes your body release [epinephrine](#) (adrenaline), [norepinephrine](#) (noradrenaline), and [cortisol](#). These are the three major stress hormones [\[R\]](#).

The stress response is supposed to get your body ready for danger. It slows down immunity, digestion, and healing, so more energy is available for 'fight or flight.' Once the danger has passed, the body returns to normal [\[R\]](#).

In other words, **it's natural to get stressed out sometimes.** Stress only becomes a problem when it starts interfering with your daily life [\[R\]](#).

This is because long-term or intense stress may contribute to [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Memory problems
- Infections
- Heart problems



Typical likelihood of feeling stressed based on **383,309** genetic variants we looked at



Your top variants that most likely impact your genetic predisposition:

GENE	SNP	GENOTYPE
SPG7	rs2292954	GG
OXTR	rs2254298	GA
MROH2A	rs7606893	CA
PDCD6IP	rs2053425	AC
LMCD1	rs114122346	CC
STAC	rs112766131	GG
/	rs76192797	AC
KCTD12	rs674041	CC
DPYSL5	rs12474330	GG
PSMD7	rs7193343	TT
CDH12	rs1545967	TA
BDNF	rs6265	TC
RBM17	rs1073646	CA
MPPED1	rs9614176	GG
SMARCA2	rs10965522	CC
HLA-DPB1	rs2064479	CC
/	rs2650673	TC
RASGEF1B	rs10033652	TT
PTGS2	rs20417	GG
/	rs137970858	TT

- Gut problems

However, not everybody responds to stress in the same way. Some people seem to thrive under pressure. Others need a much calmer environment to be at their best [R].

Up to 45% of differences in the way we perceive stress may be attributed to genetics. Genes involved influence [R, R, R]:

- Stress hormones like cortisol ([NR3C1](#), [ACE](#), [ZNF366](#))
- Calming brain chemicals ([GABRA6](#), [OPRM1](#))
- Brain function ([BDNF](#))

GENE	SNP	GENOTYPE
OXTR	rs53576	GG
/	rs150429966	AA
CHRM3	rs10925907	GG

The number of "risk" variants in this table doesn't necessarily reflect your overall result.


Your Recommendations

Your recommendations are prioritized according to the likelihood of it having an impact for you based on your genetics, along with the amount of scientific evidence supporting the recommendation.

You'll likely find common healthy recommendations at the top of the list because they are often the most impactful and most researched.

DOSAGE		DOSAGE	
1	Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)	2	Psychotherapy1 hour
3	Tai Chi1 hour	4	Dance30 minutes
5	Yoga30 minutes	6	Mindfulness30 minutes
7	B Vitamins	8	Aromatherapy30 minutes
9	Strength Training1 hour	10	Art Therapy1 hour
11	Bifidobacterium Bifidum10 billion CFU	12	Meditation30 minutes
13	Massage30 minutes	14	Pet Therapy30 minutes
15	Purple Passionflower500 mg		

1



Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

IMPACT

5 / 5

EVIDENCE

5 / 5

How to implement

Schedule weekly sessions with a certified cognitive-behavioral therapist for a period of 5 to 20 weeks. Engage actively in exercises assigned by your therapist both during sessions and as homework to apply CBT strategies to daily life.

Description

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a psychotherapeutic approach that has been effective in treating various mental health conditions by helping individuals identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors. It is widely used for conditions like depression, anxiety, and phobias.

Psychotherapy (talk therapy) involves talking about your health with a licensed therapist. It may improve the way you react to certain experiences [\[R\]](#).

Talk therapy is a great way to improve many conditions, including [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- PTSD
- OCD
- Substance use disorder
- Bipolar disorder

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of talk therapy. CBT aims to change the way you think about your life and yourself. Through CBT, a therapist can help you develop healthy coping mechanisms [\[R\]](#).


How it helps

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is the best type of talk therapy for stress relief. CBT can help almost anyone under stress, including [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- People with anxiety
- People with depression
- Students
- Caregivers
- Cancer patients

CBT may reduce your levels of the stress hormone [cortisol](#). After going through CBT, people often feel less anxious and more relaxed [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

2



Psychotherapy

IMPACT

5 / 5

EVIDENCE

5 / 5

How to implement

Schedule and attend regular sessions with a licensed psychotherapist, typically once a week for 50-60 minutes, over a period of several months to years depending on your individual needs and progress. Consistency is key, and the duration can vary widely based on personal goals and the type of psychotherapy being practiced.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Psychotherapy is a broad term for therapeutic approaches that address mental and emotional health issues through talking and counseling. It can be used to treat a wide range of psychological and emotional challenges.

Psychotherapy (talk therapy) involves talking about your health with a licensed therapist. It may improve the way you react to certain experiences and help reduce stress [\[R, R\]](#).

Psychotherapy is a great way to improve many conditions, including [\[R, R, R, R, R, R\]](#):

- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- PTSD
- OCD
- Weight problems
- Eating disorders

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of psychotherapy. CBT aims to change the way you think about your life and yourself. Through CBT, a therapist can help you develop healthy coping mechanisms [\[R\]](#).

How it helps

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is the best type of talk therapy for stress relief. CBT can help almost anyone under stress, including [\[R, R, R\]](#):

- People with anxiety
- People with depression
- Students
- Caregivers
- Cancer patients

CBT may reduce your levels of the stress hormone [cortisol](#). After going through CBT, people often feel less anxious and more relaxed [\[R, R, R\]](#).

Other types of psychotherapy that may help with stress include [\[R, R, R, R\]](#):

- Music therapy
- Animal-assisted therapy
- Art therapy



PERSONALIZED TO YOUR GENES

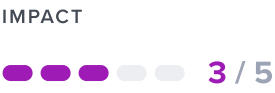
The relaxing effects of CBT may be stronger in people with your [COMT](#) gene variant [\[R\]](#).

YOUR GENETIC VARIANTS

GENE	SNP	GENOTYPE	EVIDENCE
COMT	rs4680	AG	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>



Tai Chi



How to implement

Practice Tai Chi for 30 to 60 minutes at least twice a week. Choose a quiet, spacious area and follow along with a qualified instructor, either in person at a class or through an online video tutorial, to ensure proper technique and maximum benefit.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Tai Chi is a traditional Chinese mind-body practice involving slow, flowing movements and deep breathing. It is known for its potential to reduce stress, improve balance, and enhance overall physical and mental well-being.


Tai chi involves gentle movements and breathing to strengthen and relax the mind and body. Practicing tai chi may help [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Manage pain
- Improve fitness
- Increase well-being
- Improve sleep and mood

How it helps

Tai chi (at least 20 minutes, 1x-7x/week for 2-12 months) may reduce stress by improving emotional control. However, most studies are low-quality [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

4



Dance

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE4 / 5

How to implement

Engage in dance activities for at least 30 minutes, three times per week. You can choose any form of dance you enjoy, such as ballroom, hip hop, or salsa, and you can dance at home, in a studio, or in a group class setting.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Dancing involves moving your body to music. Many people take dance classes to learn various styles of dance and improve their skills. Examples include:

- Ballet
- Zumba
- Belly dancing
- Hip hop
- Salsa

Dancing is a fun, creative, and relaxing activity. It can also provide a range of health benefits, improving your heart health, brain health, fitness, and more.

How it helps

Dancing regularly can help alleviate stress as it produces endorphins, known as "feel-good hormones," that lead to feelings of happiness and relaxation. Additionally, the focus on movement and rhythm during dance can act as a form of mindful meditation, which can help reduce feelings of anxiety and stress.

A meta-analysis of 28 studies and 2249 participants concluded that dance interventions (at least 150 min/week) **improve depression, anxiety, and stress** [\[R\]](#).

A [meta-analysis of 23 studies and 1,398 participants](#) concluded that dance interventions **improve depressive symptoms in older people** [\[R\]](#).

A [meta-analysis of 18 studies](#) concluded that community dance **improves depression, fatigue, quality of life, and functional capacity in cancer patients** [\[R\]](#).

A [Cochrane review of 3 studies and 207 cancer patients](#) found that dance **improves quality of life, somatization, and vigor but not depression, stress, anxiety, fatigue, or body image** [\[R\]](#).

A [systematic review of 41 studies and 2,374 participants](#) concluded that **dance movement therapy decreases depression and anxiety while increasing quality of life and interpersonal and cognitive skills, whereas dance interventions increase (psycho-)motor skills** [\[R\]](#).

Plaza dancing **improves psychological well-being while reducing ill-being** according to a [meta-analysis of 17 studies](#) [\[R\]](#).

A [meta-analysis of 24 studies](#) concluded that square dancing **improves mental health (including mood, self-esteem, cognitive function, and quality of life) in older people** [\[R\]](#).

Similarly, a [meta-analysis of 14 trials and 983 participants](#) found that dance interventions **improve mental health (mood, anxiety, stress, social integration, and quality of life) in older people** [\[R\]](#).

Latin dance **improves mental health by reducing stress and improving mood, social connection, and cognitive function** according to a [meta-analysis of 22 studies](#) [\[R\]](#).

Dance movement therapy **improves depression** according to a [meta-analysis of 8 studies \[R\]](#).

Dance interventions also **improve depression in people with dementia** according to a [meta-analysis of 5 trials \[R\]](#).

5

Yoga

IMPACT

3 / 5

EVIDENCE

4 / 5

How to implement

Practice yoga for at least 20 to 30 minutes a day, most days of the week. Choose a style that matches your fitness level and goals, and consider attending a class or using online resources to guide your practice.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Yoga is a mind-body practice that combines physical postures, breathing exercises, and meditation. It enhances flexibility, strength, and mental well-being and is used for stress reduction, relaxation, and overall health improvement.

[Yoga](#) combines breathing, stretching, and relaxation techniques. Practicing yoga may help [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Reduce [stress](#)
- Improve fitness
- Lower blood pressure and heart rate
- Manage pain

How it helps

Yoga (at least 2x/week for 3-12 weeks) may improve stress by [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Calming down your "fight-or-flight" response
- Reducing blood pressure
- Lowering [cortisol](#), the stress hormone

6

Mindfulness

IMPACT

3 / 5

EVIDENCE

4 / 5

How to implement

Set aside 5-10 minutes each day to practice mindfulness meditation. Find a quiet place, assume a comfortable seated position, close your eyes, focus on your breathing, and observe your thoughts and sensations without judgment.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Mindfulness involves paying focused and non-judgmental attention to the present moment. It can reduce stress, improve emotional regulation, and enhance overall mental clarity and well-being.

Mindfulness is the practice of being aware of the present moment. When practicing mindfulness, a person acknowledges their thoughts, feelings, and sensations without any judgment [R].


Mindfulness and other types of [meditation](#) may improve [R]:

- Weight and anxiety
- Low mood
- Sleep disturbances
- Pain
- High blood pressure

How it helps

Mindfulness (2-3h/week for at least 4 weeks) may help relieve stress by reducing heart rate and [cortisol](#) levels [R, R, R, R, R, R].

7



B Vitamins

IMPACT

3 / 5

EVIDENCE

3 / 5

How to implement

Take a B vitamin complex supplement once daily, preferably with your morning meal to enhance absorption. The supplement should include a range of B vitamins such as B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B5 (pantothenic acid), B6 (pyridoxine), B7 (biotin), B9 (folate), and B12 (cobalamin). Ensure consistency by taking it at the same time each day.

Description

B vitamins help the body function properly. Two examples are [vitamin B9 \(folate\)](#) and [vitamin B12](#). They play essential roles in [\[R, R, R, R\]](#):

- DNA formation
- Metabolism
- Energy production

You can get these vitamins from [\[R, R, R, R, R\]](#):

- Animal products
- Green leafy vegetables
- Citrus fruits
- Fortified foods
- Supplements

Adults should be getting **400 micrograms (mcg) of folate** and **2.4 mcg of vitamin B12** every day [\[R, R\]](#).

Folate deficiency is rare but can happen in people that don’t eat enough fruits and vegetables. Alcoholics and lactating mothers may also be at an increased risk [\[R\]](#).

Vitamin B12 deficiency often takes years to develop, as the body is able to store large amounts in the liver. Groups that may be at an increased risk include [\[R, R\]](#):

- Vegans
- Pregnant women
- Older people
- People with gut issues

How it helps

Higher dietary intake of specific B vitamins like biotin and B6 has been linked to lower odds of experiencing depression, anxiety, and stress. A study found that a higher intake of biotin was associated with reduced symptoms of these psychological conditions [\[R\]](#).

A systematic review and meta-analysis indicated that B vitamin supplementation may specifically benefit stress levels in healthy and 'at-risk' populations. The findings support the use of B vitamins to manage stress, especially in those with poor nutrient status or mood status [\[R\]](#).

B vitamins may improve brain metabolism and reduce biomarkers of oxidative stress, further contributing to reduced stress levels. This effect was especially noted in a randomized control trial where high-dose B-group vitamin supplementation resulted in changes in neural and blood biomarkers related to stress [\[R\]](#).

8

Aromatherapy

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Select essential oils like lavender, peppermint, or eucalyptus. Use a diffuser to disperse the scent into your room for 30-60 minutes at a time, up to 3 times a day. Alternatively, apply a few drops diluted in a carrier oil directly to your skin, such as on your temples or wrists, twice a day.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Aromatherapy is a holistic practice that uses the scents and aromas of essential oils to promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It is often used for relaxation, stress reduction, and to address various health concerns through inhalation or topical application of essential oils.

Aromatherapy uses concentrated plant extracts known as **essential oils**. They can be inhaled using a diffuser (a device that releases small amounts of oil into the air) or applied to the skin using a roller [\[R\]](#).

[Lavender](#) is a decorative flower and a calming herb and its essential oil is commonly used in aromatherapy. People use it to [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Reduce anxiety [\[R\]](#)
- Improve sleep quality [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#)
- Relieve pain [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#)

Essential oils can be harmful if not used properly. Tips for using them safely include [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Diluting them properly using a plant-based carrier oil (such as olive oil or almond oil)
- Using diffusers in a well-ventilated area for a maximum of 1 hour
- If using on the skin, testing a small area first and waiting a day before using more
- Keeping essential oils away from candles or other heat sources

How it helps

Aromatherapy (for 5-10 min) may help control stress by promoting relaxation [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Studied essential oils include those of [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Lavender
- Rose
- Peppermint

Oil blends may also help e.g., clary sage, lavender, and bergamot.

However, note that most studies are low-quality and some show that aromatherapy doesn’t reduce stress [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#).

Please note: Some essential oils may cause skin irritation, allergic reactions, sun sensitivity, or breathing problems. Avoid using them near the eyes, nose, or other sensitive areas. Some oils are not safe for children, pregnant women, or pets. Consult your health provider before using essential oils [\[R\]](#).

9

Strength Training

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Engage in strength training exercises, such as weight lifting or bodyweight exercises, for 60 minutes per session, 2 to 3 times per week. Ensure you work all major muscle groups and rest each muscle group for at least 48 hours before exercising it again.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Strength training, also called resistance or *anaerobic* training, contracts the muscles against an external resistance for short periods of time. This helps gain muscle strength, tone, and mass. This can include activities like weight lifting, pushups, and crunches.

Strength training, also known as resistance training, is a type of physical exercise that uses resistance to build strength, anaerobic endurance, and size [\[R\]](#). Some of the most common strength training methods include [\[R\]](#):

- Weight lifting
- Bodyweight exercises like push-ups, pull-ups, squats, and lunges.
- Resistance bands
- Plyometrics or explosive force exercises

The benefits of strength training are numerous, and include [\[R\]](#):

- Increased muscle strength
- Improved bone health
- Reduced risk of injury
- Improved balance and coordination
- Enhanced mood
- Boost metabolism


Consult with a doctor before starting any new exercise program, especially if you have any health conditions.

How it helps

Strength training has consistently been shown to reduce anxiety levels, improve mood, and decrease symptoms of depression. Regular engagement in strength training exercises may lead to reductions in anxiety, depression, and stress symptoms, improving overall mental health [\[R\]](#).

Engaging in strength training may enhance the body's ability to handle stress by improving the physiological stress response. This includes better regulation of stress hormones like cortisol and improvements in overall stress management [\[R\]](#).

10



Art Therapy

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Participate in art therapy sessions, which can include activities such as painting, sculpting, or drawing, for 1-2 hours per week. These sessions can be done either in group settings guided by a trained art therapist or individually, depending on your comfort level and goals. It is beneficial to engage in this practice consistently for several months to observe the therapeutic benefits.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

1 hour

Description

Art therapy is a type of therapy that encourages free self-expression and reflection through [\[R\]](#):

- Painting
- Drawing
- Clay modeling

It may be combined with mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice of being aware of the present moment without any judgment [\[R\]](#).

Art therapy is used to improve [\[R\]](#):

- Self-esteem
- Self-awareness
- Emotional resilience
- Social skills


How it helps

Art therapy sessions (1x-2x/week for 8-10 weeks) may reduce stress and improve quality of life [\[R, R, R, R, R, R, R\]](#).

Art therapy may help by [\[R\]](#):

- Reducing heart rate
- Improving memory and attention

11



Bifidobacterium Bifidum

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Take a bifidobacterium bifidum supplement according to the manufacturer's instructions, usually once or twice daily with a glass of water and potentially with meals. Supplement duration varies; some may use it continuously for ongoing gut health support, while others might take it for a specific period, such as 4-8 weeks, especially during or after antibiotic treatment.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE
10 billion CFU

Description

Bifidobacterium bifidum is a probiotic strain that can help support digestive health and maintain a balanced gut microbiome.

[Bifidobacterium bifidum](#) is a [probiotic](#) bacterium naturally present in the human gastrointestinal tract. This species is the second most abundant one in breast-fed infants, but its levels decrease during adulthood [\[R\]](#).

People take *B. bifidum* to help with [\[R\]](#):

- Digestive issues
- Eczema
- Infections

How it helps

Supplementation with *B. bifidum* (strain R0071, for 6-12 weeks) may reduce perceived stress and anxiety [\[R, R, R, R, R\]](#).

12

Meditation

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Set aside 10-20 minutes each day in a quiet space without distractions to practice meditation. Focus on your breath or perform guided meditation using an app or audio track.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Meditation is a mindfulness practice that can reduce stress, improve mental clarity, and promote relaxation. Regular meditation is associated with numerous mental and emotional health benefits, including reduced anxiety and enhanced emotional well-being.

Meditation is a relaxation technique that trains your mind to focus and redirect your thoughts. Some of the main types of meditation are [\[R\]](#):

- Mindfulness
- Focused
- Transcendental
- Mantra
- Moving

People use meditation to improve [\[R\]](#), [\[R\]](#):

- Stress and anxiety
- Mood
- Sleep disturbances
- Pain


How it helps

Meditation, especially mindfulness meditation, has been shown to reduce overall psychological symptoms, enhance the sense of control, and increase spiritual experiences. These changes contribute to stress reduction [\[R\]](#).

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses have found that meditation reduces several physiological markers of stress, including cortisol, blood pressure, and heart rate. These reductions are indicative of a decreased stress response, promoting better health and well-being [\[R\]](#).

Studies have also highlighted that meditation may lead to improvements in anxiety, depression, and pain, which are often exacerbated by stress. These improvements further contribute to the overall efficacy of meditation in managing stress [\[R\]](#).

13



Message

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Schedule a massage session, ideally with a licensed therapist, for 30-60 minutes, once a week. Choose a type of massage that suits your specific needs, such as Swedish for relaxation or deep tissue for muscle tension.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Massage therapy involves the manipulation of soft tissues to relax muscles, reduce stress, and alleviate pain. It can improve circulation, promote relaxation, and provide relief from various physical and mental health concerns.

If you’ve ever had a professional [massage](#), then you probably know how much good it can do. Massages may help with [R](#), [R](#), [R](#):

- Anxiety
- Pain
- Fatigue

Reflexology is a type of massage. It involves applying pressure to specific parts of your feet or hands. In theory, by pressing on these areas, you can relieve tension from other parts of the body [R](#).

Acupressure is a similar technique, in which pressure points are used to help with stress and pain [R](#), [R](#).

How it helps


Weekly massages may reduce stress. People who get massages tend to have lower stress hormones, blood pressure, and heart rates. They may also sleep better [R](#), [R](#), [R](#), [R](#).

Stress due to major health issues can be hard to manage. Massage may help reduce this kind of stress [R](#), [R](#), [R](#), [R](#).

Aromatherapy may enhance the relaxing effects of massage. A therapist uses scented massage oils such as lavender essential oil [R](#), [R](#), [R](#).

Reflexology is another type of massage that may help with stress. During reflexology, a practitioner applies pressure to specific points on the feet and hands [R](#), [R](#).

14



Pet Therapy

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Engage with a pet, such as a dog or cat, for at least 15-30 minutes a day. This can include activities like playing, petting, or simply sitting together. It's beneficial to do this regularly, aiming for daily interactions, to maximize the emotional and physical health benefits.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

30 minutes

Description

Pet therapy, also known as animal-assisted therapy, involves the interaction between trained animals and individuals to provide emotional and physical benefits. Spending time with therapy animals, typically dogs or cats, can reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance overall well-being by promoting relaxation and social interaction, making it particularly beneficial for people facing mental health challenges or chronic conditions.

Animal-assisted therapy, also known as **pet therapy**, involves human-animal interaction to foster physical and emotional healing and provide social support. This therapy may use different animals, such as [R](#), [R](#):


- Dogs
- Horses
- Dolphins

Animal-assisted therapy may involve touching, playing, grooming, and talking with the animal [R](#).

How it helps

Animal-assisted therapy (10-45 min) may reduce stress. However, most studies are low-quality [R](#), [R](#), [R](#).

15



Purple Passionflower

IMPACT3 / 5

EVIDENCE3 / 5

How to implement

Take a 500 mg supplement of purple passionflower daily, preferably at the same time each day. It can be consumed with or without food according to your preference.

TYPICAL STARTING DOSE

500 mg

Description

Purple passionflower is a flowering plant native to the Americas, often used in traditional herbal medicine for its potential calming and anxiety-reducing effects due to its alkaloid and flavonoid content. It may promote relaxation and better sleep when consumed as an herbal remedy or dietary supplement.

[Purple passionflower](#) (*Passiflora incarnata*) is a flowering vine used in traditional medicine [\[R\]](#).

This plant is rich in compounds that relax the mind. **It may help with sleep problems and anxiety** [\[R, R, R\]](#).

How it helps

Purple passionflower extract may improve stress by boosting [GABA](#), a chemical that calms the mind [\[R, R, R\]](#).

In most studies, people took **pills with 260-700 mg of passionflower** before a stressful event [\[R, R, R, R\]](#).

Purple passionflower combined with [valerian](#), [lemon balm](#), and [butterbur](#) may also lower stress [\[R\]](#).

Please note: Purple passionflower is not safe for pregnant women. It can also interact with drugs for anxiety and depression. Make sure to consult your doctor before taking purple passionflower [\[R, R, R, R\]](#).