

Conquer stress to stay healthy



**Did you know
that your **mental
state**, especially
stress, affects your
immune system?**

Navigating cold and flu season is complicated.

No one enjoys being sick. You want your loved ones to stay healthy too. The key to avoiding illness is taking care of yourself in different ways.

In broad terms, when your body is stressed, it focuses on dealing with that. The result is that the hormones released because of stress suppress your immune system.¹ This can make you more susceptible to illness.

You can keep yourself healthy by doing two things—reducing stress and taking steps to help boost your immune system. The good news is there are many actions that do both.

See the following page for ways to improve your overall health and hopefully keep sickness away.

Reduce stress



- 1 **Remember to breathe.** Relax and pay attention to your breathing. This will calm you down in stressful moments.
- 2 **Process.** Release your thoughts and feelings through journaling or talking with friends or a therapist.
- 3 **Find fun.** Do activities that make you happy. Ask a friend to join for added fun.
- 4 **Move.** Physical activity helps enhance a sense of well-being and reduces negative feelings.²
- 5 **Rest.** Limit caffeine, alcohol and screen time before bedtime to help you get a good night's sleep.³

Boost your immune system

- ✓ **Cut out processed, refined foods.** These include hot dogs, sausages, white bread and pastries, refined sugars (cane sugar, brown sugar, molasses), cream, butter, shortening, fast food and fried foods.⁴
- ✓ **Eat healthy, well-balanced meals.** Include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats.⁴
- ✓ **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of water and other calorie-free beverages like green tea. Try to limit alcohol and avoid sodas and other sweetened beverages.⁴

Adopting these healthy habits can help reduce your stress levels, paying off far beyond cold and flu season.

Not a Livongo member? See if you're eligible for personalized health support at Go.Livongo.com.

¹<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/stress>

²<https://www.apa.org/topics/exercise-fitness/stress>

³<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/click-here-happiness/202212/8-essential-tips-combat-stress>

⁴<https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/healthy-living/nutrition/foods-to-limit/8-food-ingredients-that-can-cause-inflammation>