

Brought to you by NYC Transit,  
HR Benefits Wellness Team.  
April 2016

## Fight Stress with Healthy Habits

Life has its peaks and valleys, and sometimes they're stressful—even when they positively impact our lives. Stress is that feeling you get when your equilibrium changes, for better or for worse.

April is Stress Awareness Month, and April 16 is Stress Awareness Day. Now is the time to improve our awareness of stress and face life's everyday challenges with improved resilience.

The Center of Disease Control and Prevention advises to use healthy ways to cope with stress. Healthy practices can avoid physical and mental health issues. The Wellness Team at New York City Transit also encourages you to take healthy actions to help manage your stress.

Researchers reference the Human Performance Curve, which we've included below. As you can see, not all stress is bad. The level of stress under which you operate is important. It is ideal to be in the focused/energized part of the curve. Opposite ends show that your performance suffers because you may have too little stress and are inactive or you may have too much stress and you're exhausted, moving to burn out.



To help you stay even keel all year long, we've included the following valuable tips:



### Sleep

Sleep is critical to well-being, but most of us aren't getting enough of it. As a result, we're more prone to stress. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends seven-eight hours of sleep for adults.



### Eat Well

Think you're too busy to eat well? Think again—poor nutrition could be fueling your stress level. The Stress Management Society has identified a link between nutrition and stress, and it's a continuous cycle: a less balanced diet may increase stress, which, in turn, leads to craving sugary and fatty foods.



### Relax

Relaxation comes in many forms, such as meditating and listening to music. The Mayo Clinic agrees that activities like meditation can help reduce your stress and bring "inner peace." Listening to music is also known to be an effective form of stress therapy.



### Manage Your Time

According to the CDC managing your time equally between projects and healthy practices can lower your stress level. Some sources suggest you keep a journal to track your stress triggers.

**Learn More:** about 10 healthy habits, and try to incorporate them into your daily life starting today.

- Talk with family and friends.
- Engage in daily physical activity.
- Embrace what you are able to change.
- Remember to laugh.
- Give up the bad habits.
- Slow down.
- Get enough sleep.
- Get organized.
- Practice giving back.
- Try not to worry.

### Did you know?

When life gets stressful, the MTA has resources to help. Using our Work Life Services Program is another smart strategy to tackle stress. Call Work Life Services at 347-643-7376 when you face a crisis and need in-the-moment support or help with everyday challenges. Work Life Services offers you services and resources to cope with your stress.