

Reducing the Risk of Developing Chronic Stress

At one time or another, almost everyone has felt stressed by demands at work or at home. Stress can take a toll on how we feel both physically and emotionally and also interfere with our ability to live our lives to the fullest – it may even lead to serious health disorders like depression, heart disease and substance dependence.

April is Stress Awareness Month and OAOHN would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to care for yourself, and your loved ones, by reminding you of the importance of preventive care.

A great way to reduce your risk of developing chronic stress is by maintaining spiritual wellness. According to Mental Health America, spirituality can help reduce stress. Below are some suggestions to keep your good health:

- Find what brings your life purpose and align your choices with it. Wherever your passion is, there you'll find your purpose.
- Nurture your connection with God/your Higher Power through regular spiritual practices. Some people choose prayer, others meditate, some read Scripture, others walk through nature.
- Connect with others who share your values. Having meaningful relationships with others which focus on what is important to us reminds us that we are not alone.
- Find opportunities to serve. Helping others in need, either through volunteer work or some other means, nurtures our spirit when we feel our actions make a positive difference.

If you feel like you need assistance in managing persistent stress, please contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or make an appointment with your primary care physician (PCP).

Your EAP is a confidential resource that provides counseling, information and referral services to help address personal, family or work-related concerns.

Having a PCP who can coordinate your care and refer you to a specialist, if needed, is vital to your good health. If you don't have a PCP, just visit your insurance carrier's website, look for the "find a doctor" area and follow the instructions.