



Assessing My Ability to **Manage Stress**

Part 1: Circle the signs of stress that you experience when something stressful is happening. Add any signs you experience that are not found on the lists.

Physical Signs	Emotional Signs	Behavioral Signs
Headache Fatigue Unable to sleep Upset stomach Muscle tension or pain Worsening of skin conditions, such as hives or rashes Heart beats faster Breathing gets faster Body sweats More frequent illnesses	Restlessness Lack of focus or motivation Anxiety Panic attacks Irritability Anger Sadness Depression Memory impairment Feeling constantly pressured, hassled, or hurried	Overeating Under eating Outbursts of emotion Alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use Withdrawal from others More disagreements with others

Rate yourself on your ability to recognize when you are under stress. Place a checkmark next to the statements you believe are true for you.

Adapted From:
American Psychological Association's "Stress in America" Press Room, www.apa.org
Nemours Foundation, www.teenshealth.org
Mayo Clinic, www.mayoclinic.com

<input type="checkbox"/>	I always know when I'm under stress.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I usually know when I'm under stress.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stress sometimes sneaks up on me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	People tell me I'm stressed out when I don't feel like it.



Look at your answers for Part 1 and write a few sentences that summarize your ability to recognize stress.



Part 2: Identify your preferred stress management strategies. Place a checkmark in the column that best describes your use of the stated strategy. Add any strategies that are not found on the list.

Strategy	I use this strategy regularly.	I use this strategy sometimes.	I never use this strategy.
Cut down on the number of activities you commit to.			
Get regular physical activity.			
Eat nutritious foods in appropriate amounts.			
Get a good night's sleep.			
Make time to relax.			
Stay calm.			
Think positively.			
Lower unrealistic expectations.			
Focus on things you can control and let go of the rest.			
Accept that you are under stress.			
Accept the fact that you will make mistakes and it's okay to ask for help.			
Rehearse responding to stressful situations and how you might handle them.			
Talk to a friend or family member.			
Do enjoyable activities that relax and distract you.			
Laugh.			
Talk about issues that bother you before emotions build.			
Get professional help.			



Place a checkmark in the column that best describes your use of the relaxation technique. Add any techniques that are not found on the list.

Relaxation Technique	I use this technique regularly.	I use this technique sometimes.	I never use this technique.
Reading a good book			
Making time for a hobby			
Taking a relaxing bath			
Tinkering with electronics			
Listening to music			
Spending time with my pet			
Spending time outdoors			
Getting involved with an art project			
Writing in a journal			
Playing video games			
Surfing the Internet			
Being physically active			

As you review your list of stress management strategies, do you think you manage stress well or could you make improvements? Explain your answer.



Part 3: Rate yourself on how prepared you are for stress. Use this rating scale:

- 1 = This is a behavior I do all the time.
- 2 = This behavior I do some of the time.
- 3 = I need to work on this behavior.

My Rating	Preparation Strategy
	Eat nutritious foods
	Get regular physical activity
	Get enough sleep
	Participate regularly in relaxing activities
	Practice setting boundaries
	Prioritize time
	Build and maintain a support system with friends and family
	Know where to get professional help if needed
	Aware of personal thoughts and feelings
	Think positively
	Solve problems and make decisions
	Practice asking others for help
	Solve problems as they occur

Are there any preparation strategies you want to work on? If so, which ones?