

6 Great Ways to Start Your Day

The way you spend your morning can add a certain flavor to the rest of your day. Here are some healthy lifestyle habits to incorporate into your morning routine that can leave you better able to handle the stress you experience. Try one or several, and experiment until you find what suits you.

Put On Some Music

Music therapy has been shown to reduce stress and have a positive effect on health. But you don't need a therapist to enjoy some of the benefits music has to offer. Listening to music as you get ready and start your day will create positive energy and a soothing sense of peace (or a sense of fun, if you play party music). Music can compliment other healthy lifestyle habits, adding a sense of peace to a yoga workout, putting a spring in your step on a morning walk, or stimulating your mind as you write in your journal.

Stretch in the Shower

The hot water will loosen up your muscles, so it's easier to get a good stretch. The act of stretching will help to release stored tension and enable you to start the day feeling more relaxed, at peace, and ready to handle what comes your way.

Eat a Balanced Breakfast

For those of you who start the day on a bagel and coffee, *read this!* Breakfast is known as 'the most important meal of the day' for a very good reason: a healthy meal in the morning can balance your blood sugar levels and give you the sustenance you need to handle physical and mental stress. Without it, you will be less resilient, both physically and mentally. Be sure to have plenty of protein and fruit, not just caffeine and empty calories!

Drink Green Tea

Sipping a warm cup of tea is a soothing activity that will help you prepare for the day ahead and feel nurtured. Green tea is loaded with antioxidants, so it's a delicious *and* healthy lifestyle choice.

Write in Your Journal

Journaling has many health and stress management benefits, and can also lead to increased self-awareness. Writing once a day can help you feel focused, process negative emotions, and solve problems.

Morning Walk

Walking has so many health benefits, the stress management benefits are practically just gravy! A morning walk can get you ready for your day, help you sleep better at night, lower your stress level, and reduce your risk of numerous health conditions. And if you bring a dog with you, you'll be lavished with attention as well!

Yoga

For a healthy body and peaceful mind, few activities give as much 'bang for your buck' as yoga. Combining all the goodness of several stress management techniques, such as diaphragmic breathing, meditation, stretching and more, yoga provides some of the best stress management and health benefits you can find in a single technique. A good way to start your morning is by doing a series of yoga poses called Sun Salutations.