



# Acu News

"If you know the art of deep breathing, you have the strength, wisdom and courage of ten tigers." – Chinese Proverb

## Learn to Navigate Your Stress This Winter

Signs of stress include depression, anxiety, low sex drive, memory and concentration difficulties, mood swings and irritability, low moods, feels of anguish and much more. Below, we break down a few of these symptoms, give you tips on how you can combat the onset of stress and suggest Acupoints to focus on when you are feeling emotionally under the weather.

### Depression and Anxiety

Signs of depression and anxiety include increased aches and pains, low mood or a feeling of dread, chronic fatigue, low sex drive, and disruptive sleep patterns (lack of deep sleep or oversleeping).

Given that depression and anxiety are known to affect sleep cycles and can cause a lack of deep sleep, it's also likely that it leads to a weakened immune system. Having your health compromised is discouraging enough and can also add to the feeling of having an imbalanced mood.

The Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA) states that research suggests a link between high levels of stress and the onset of depression. Therefore, it's important to learn how to navigate and prevent obstacles that cause us stress.

### Memory, Concentration Issues, and Mood Swings

When you become emotionally strained, your stress-response pathways in your brain don't function as they're meant to. The neurons don't connect properly thus compromising your retention of long-term memories which means that you are more likely to be forgetful.

To prevent memory loss, keep your brain active with puzzles, board games, strategy games and so on. Building our memory is similar to how we build muscular strength, the more you use your brain, the stronger your receptors become. Keeping your body and mind active with a healthy diet, consistent exercise and having healthy social relationships is a great way to prevent stress or keep it from blossoming.

Enhance the capacity of your brain's memory by learning unfamiliar or new skills. Push yourself out of your comfort zone and learn something that takes cognitive effort such as learning a dance, a language, an instrument, learning to draw something precise that requires concentration and so on.

### Plan Ahead and Prevent Stress

There are many ways to prevent stress such as the suggestions listed above. Other ways to help plan ahead and keep your stress under control is to utilize a mental health professional if needed! A counselor is a great way to get guidance on many issues that pertain to home-life, work-life, relationships or anything that you may not be able to navigate on your own in the moment.

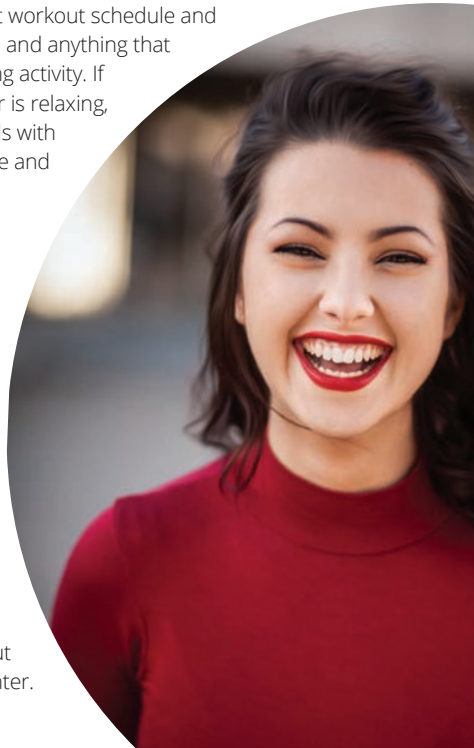
Mental health professionals are there to bounce your thoughts and feelings off of in private environment without the risk or breach of confidentiality.

Seeing a counselor is just as important as going to the gym! Working on both your physical and mental health helps you stay balanced. You go to the gym to stay physically healthy, so why not go to see a counselor to keep your mental health in tip-top shape?

This leads into our next point; daily exercise. As mentioned above, it's important to have a consistent workout schedule and can be combined with meditation and anything that you may deem as a stress-relieving activity. If you find that being near the water is relaxing, then rent a kayak and kill two birds with one stone by getting your exercise and meditation out of the way!

Keep in mind that some activities, such as drinking alcohol and smoking affect both your brain and your body. Avoid consuming these products as well if you find yourself hindered when you partake in them.

Preventing or reducing stress isn't a one-size-fits-all approach and will look different for everyone. That's why it's important to try different avenues until you find a routine that works best for you. Talk to us if you have any questions about how to prepare your mind for winter.



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