Stress Management Guide For Heartburn

By Tom and Isabelle Lane

www.TheHeartburnSolution.com

Live Heartburn-Free Everyday with a Stress-Free Life!
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Introduction

Just about everyone who you talk to nowadays will complain about being “stressed out.” Thirty years ago, no one ever even used this term. Today, however, it is a staple in most conversations. We often refer to ourselves as being “stressed out” when we discuss our careers as well as our personal lives.

Recent studies indicate that even children are “stressed out.” Little kids, who shouldn’t have a care in the world, are becoming “stressed” due to activities at home or at school. In most cases, they are simply inheriting the stress from their parents.

Psychologists who deal with “stressed out” individuals blame the current situation on everything from the foods we eat to our society. Most agree that people today attempt to do “too much” and end up getting burned out.

We all experience stress during the course of our lives. There is a difference, however, in being constantly stressed out and experiencing stress due to a certain situation. Anything that dramatically disrupts our lives is a cause for stress. Most people recover from the stressful situation after it has been resolved or over a period of time.

Other people tend to get stressed out all the time. In fact, their entire life appears to be one big stress factory. This is unhealthy and is gradually taking its toll on our society. Each year, billions of dollars are spent on symptoms of stress. There are dozens of prescriptive medicines on the market today that address stress and anxiety. Millions of people are on some sort of medication for “stress.”
What has happened in the past thirty years that has caused us to become such a nation of stressed out individuals? Is society expecting too much from us or are we expecting too much from ourselves? Why are so many people suffering from the following:

Anxiety disorder
Social anxiety disorder
Obsessive compulsive disorder
Anorexia Nervosa
Depression
Panic attacks

Years ago, no one ever even heard of these conditions, now they are featured in every magazine you encounter. There is a huge market to treat both depression and anxiety, which usually go hand in hand and are the offspring of stress.

Pharmaceutical companies are cranking out different anti-depressants all of the time. These are said to be ‘better” than the other anti-depressants that they discovered a year prior. Thirty years ago, no one ever even heard the term “anti-depressant.” If you used that expression back then, people would think you were talking about something to do with your car.

Today it seems as if every single person you encounter is “on something” for stress, depression or anxiety. All of them can neatly be lumped into the same category and are caused by stress.

Stress is usually at the root of all of the above psychological disorders. It also affects us physically as well. Stress has been linked to every disease known to man, including heart disease and cancer. Clearly, it is not a good idea for people to be under stress. But, as human beings, we are going to experience stressful situations. There is no avoiding this fact. Therefore, in order to really be able to help cure ourselves from being “stressed out” we need to know how to do the following:

Identify stressors that affect our daily lives;
Eliminate the stressors of which we can free ourselves;
Learn to deal with stressful situations in a healthy way
If you are one of the millions of people who are feeling stressed out, you must take a look at the reasons why you are stressed out and try to do what you can to eliminate as much stress as you can from your life. If you continue to be “stressed out” you will most likely find yourself taking some sort of prescription drug for one of the above disorders. Taking prescription drugs for stress does not mean that you are “crazy.” This book will discuss alternative ways to deal with stress, but as a last resort, you are better off with the medications than allowing your body to be battered by stress.

Life is way too short to go through it being stressed out. And chances are that you will shorten your lifespan significantly if you continue to be “stressed out” through the daily course of your life. This is especially true as many of the things over which you may be stressed are minor, but have been blown up in your mind to be worse than they actually are.

Wouldn’t it be nice to actually be able to go through life without being “stressed out” over everything and without drugs or medications? This book will teach you everything you wanted to know about stress and how you can avoid this scourge that seems to be plaguing millions of people.

In this guide, you will be introduced a program to manage stress, learn how to meditate by focusing on your breathing. Lastly, you’ll be able to tackle stress with a carefully designed Stress Reduction Plan.

Act now and keep your stress in control!
Stress has been proven to have a strong connection with most chronic conditions as shown by recent researches. Stress does not cause the ailment per se, but when combined with other factors like toxic deposits, inappropriate diet, genetic susceptibilities, loss of good bacteria, among others, it can dramatically worsen any existing medical condition.

**Gut Feelings**

I’ve sure you have heard of expressions like “My gut reaction to this problem is..” and “I've got a really bad feeling about this. I can just feel it in my gut.” What is the origin of these expressions?

Chemical receptors are everywhere along our digestive tract. They not only help in the digestion but also respond to changes in emotions, stress and mood. These chemical receptors are like serotonin (cellular secretions) found in our brain.

Usually, anti-depressant drugs like Prozac and Paxil target Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) because by altering the mechanism, it can improve our mood.
Gut and Our Emotions

The stomach is also highly influenced by the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve is a nerve can also affect how our heart functions. Interestingly, the vagus nerve does not only reside in the stomach and the heart, it is a long connected nerve that can also be found in our head, upper body, right up to the stomach.

It is known that our heart affects the emotions and its connection to the stomach means that a sudden change in our emotions can have great impact on your reflux condition.

Doctors sometimes perform a procedure called vagotomy, or cutting or the vagus nerves in the stomach, to lower the production of stomach acid. But surgery options are really the last resort, and most of the time overproduction of acid, which leads to heartburn, are often the result of poor diet and stress factors.

Gut and the Young

Heartburn is also common in children. On average, around 3% of children ages 3 to 17 have heartburn, and the percentage can hit 5% for older children. Besides diet, the cause of heartburn is often due to difficult to handle relationships at home and stress in schools.

Stress

Stress Affects Immune System

During stressful times, when you get anxious, worried or afraid, the immune system’s ability to heal is drastically lessened which later on causes slow healing process of the body.

Stress lowers the function of the immune system because with its presence, the body releases cortisol, which is a hormone that makes your body vulnerable to Candida and other parasites. Blood sugar level is also elevated by stress.
With high sugar levels, Candida is nourished up to the point of overgrowth. This gives way to Candida yeast overgrowth manifestations. Stress also alters the environment in your gut as it can lower the number of good bacteria. This possibly leads to various complications connected to the lowered number of probiotics. Although it has not yet been established that the mind can cause ailments, your thoughts can surely worsen an existing disease. When it comes to matters involving conditions of the GI, this link is more visible.

Stress Aggravates Acid Reflux

It is a biological truth that nerves can be found from the brain to many organs of digestions like the colon, small intestines, pancreas, gallbladder, stomach, and esophagus.

A simple scent or sight of food, or anything that calls for small nervous discharge, can elevate the level of acidity in the stomach and give way to contractions and production of enzymes.

It makes sense how high nervous discharge that happens during situations loaded with stress can result in excessive acid production, irritation, cramps, and abdominal pain. It can definitely aggravate acid reflux symptoms.
**Fight or Flight**

The “fight or flight response” is the body’s mechanism during times of extreme stress that requires quick action. This usually happens in times of danger or the likes.

While your body experiences this kind of response, the circulation, heart, brain, and GI tract undergo extreme changes. The balance of stomach acid can be altered, and as a result, you may have diarrhea, constipation and cramps, and symptoms of GERD may also get even worse.

It is highly recommended to utilize all methods to control stress and stay away from stressful instances in order to maintain an reflux-free environment.

**Advantages of Stress Control Techniques**

Stress cannot be completely gotten rid of because it is part of human nature along with modern life. Despite this, by learning stress mind control and techniques for relaxation, it can be lessened and monitored dramatically. These techniques will assist you in dealing with detrimental and extreme times of stress, which are typical in this modern social environment.

You must know that stress is a product of the way you see occurrences and the way you respond to them. Modifying our perspective in life and allowing our minds to respond differently can regulate stressful situations most of the time, if not always.

This part of the book gives different ways that are proven to be extremely useful in lessening stress and having a positive outlook. These are essential in keeping a harmonized and fully-functioning acid reflux free environment.
How Your Emotions Affect Heartburn

Identify all the emotions you are feeling when you are experiencing the following gut reactions. When you are stressed, frustrated, angry, anxious or having other strong emotions, acid reflux will get worse.

Do you experience the following emotions?

- Depressed
- Anger
- Frustration
- Pessimism
- Anxiety
- Disappointment
- Stress
- Livid
Meditation refers to the practice of calming the mind and opening it to different states of consciousness. The main priority of meditation is to defer all thoughts so as to have a quiet state of mind that eventually leads to the meditative state.

**Purpose of Meditation**

Meditation targets getting a higher level of knowledge and hitting a state of relaxation and mental hygiene. In a meditative state, we achieve a powerful conscious state of being aware of our immortal soul and our self as an individual. Also, we become familiar to its connection to the cosmic spirit which is also called intuitive enlightenment.

This enlightenment is from the harmony between our individual self and the spirit of the cosmos, which is where the ego is unrecognized and the center of one’s life become clear and more pronounced.

While meditating, the person gets to experience an inner peace of mind and a feeling of floating with the flow of nature, and this is also called Tao or the Way.

**Benefits of Meditation**

Engaging to meditation on a daily basis can give significant rewards to both the body and the soul. Meditation can shield a person from the effects of stress, which is undeniably connected to the challenges of life today.
People who meditate have noted a drastic progress in their health, self-mastery, and calmness.

Scientific researchers who have tried to learn the things brought about by stress have established that the body enters a state of having relaxed muscles and decreased blood pressure during meditation. This leads to a reduced build-up, stress, and tension.

Compared to regular states of walking or sleeping, people who meditate exhibited patterns of slow brain waves during EEG tests.

When done regularly, meditation can help relax the different systems in the body. It also encourages quicker healing process and boosts strength, energy, and vigor.

Some instances that are full of stress can affect our health and be the cause of many inequalities and imbalances in our systems. All the techniques in yoga are focused in controlling your responses to stressful situations. By doing only the postures, you can still get more relaxation and harmony.
Throughout the time of meditation, you might experience some immense changes. During this process, you will significantly increase your self-awareness and gain acceptance about yourself, becoming more attached to your emotions and learning to recognize negative feelings from stressful situations and control the way you respond to them. You will also learn to be more at ease and at peace with your surrounding environment. With constant meditation you will find peace and develop an excellent positive thinking and outlook in life.

**How to Meditate**

There are different ways to meditate, and all them commonly have 2 basic techniques:

**Focus On Your Breathing**

Utilizing the mantra which can either be a word or phrase that is repeated to enter into a meditative state that calms and raises one's state of mind. Remember that to really succeed in meditation, you must be willing to do it every day.

A few minutes every day is all you need in order to get significant control over your worries and rest your body and soul. You will surely feel more resilient, more organized, better, and healthier. You'll develop personal balance and inner calmness of the mind.

**Tips for Meditation**

The preferable time to meditate is either early in the morning or before going to sleep at night. This is the time when there is the least disturbance.

Look for a comfortable place that is free of distractions and noise. Wear clothes that are comfortable and be certain that you sit or lie in a relaxing place like your favorite spot in the house.

For the position, you are free to choose any kind according to your will. What matters is you are completely at ease and relaxed. One of the posture that most people prefers the most is called ‘corpse posture’ or Savasana.
In this position, with outstretched legs, lie flat on your back. Let your feet fall outwards while your arms are on the sides of your body. With curled fingers, your palms must be turned up. Thin cushions may be placed behind the neck for support.
Short and rapid ineffective breathing, along with increased rate of heartbeat may happen as a result of being stressed. With improper breathing or that which is rapid or shallow with only your upper lungs, you get to breathe your own carbon dioxide and have lesser amounts of oxygen in your blood.

This leads the body into a condition of being stressed. With rapid breathing, your body reads it as a sign of suffocation, which leads to anxiety and even panic attacks.

Why Practice Breathing?

Proper deep breathing is also important for the cells. With it, you are able to provide more oxygen to your cells which gives way to better health.

Using optimal breathing exercises, you must be familiar with proper breathing. With correct breathing, you will get more oxygen in your blood. Also, it will pacify your mind as it aids cells in getting rid of toxins more successfully. If you breathe properly with daily meditations, proper breathing can help you achieve positive changes in your life.
The Proper Way of Breathing

Breathing correctly equates to deep breathing. When sleeping, we get the change to naturally breathe deeply. When inhaling, let your lungs be filled in a gradual manner. First, let air into the lower part of the lungs, then the middle, and then the upper part.

When exhaling, do the opposite of this. You should first clear the upper part, middle, and the lower area. Also, instead of using your mouth, do this using your nostrils.

Inhaling

The proper way of inhaling must be practiced uninterruptedly into 3 parts that are smoothly connected to each other.

When inhaling, first, let your stomach be pushed forward. Focus on your stomach before anything else. Then, allow your rib cage to expand. Only after this should you elevate the chest and collarbone.

Exhaling

Let your collarbone and ribs clear air out automatically. Then, slightly push your stomach in to release the air left inside the lungs.

Different Breathing Exercises

Breathing Through the Nostril

These breathing exercises should be practiced many times a day:

1. With your thumb, close your right nostril and exhale with the left nostril.
2. Gradually let air in through your left nostril to the count of 4.
3. With both nostrils closed, hold your breath for 16 seconds.
4. Perform the first 3 steps with the left nostril closed.
5. After holding your breath for the second round, your right nostril should be closed as you let air out from the left.

**Abdominal Breathing Exercise**

1. Lie flat on your back, be comfortable and start inhaling air through your nose.
2. Let air out through your mouth.
3. When you breathe in, concentrate on your breathing patterns and slowly take the air from your diaphragm. Make sure that the diaphragm doesn’t collapse immediately after you exhale.
4. Perform this for at least 15 minutes.

**Meditation through Your Imagination**

With your eyes shut close, try to focus on your breathing. While you inhale and exhale, concentrate on the sound of your breathing or listen to your very own heart rate.

Try to solely focus your thoughts on your breathing, but let it come and go purposely. A variety of thoughts will travel to your mind as you breathe, and you do not have to go against them. Keep in mind that they are just thoughts, and you should not be distracted from them.

Be sure that your lungs are totally empty before you exhale

Your breathing will become steady and calm. It will keep to a certain rhythm.

Eventually, listen to sounds that are not close to your body. You can opt to listen to the blowing of the wind or the sound of rustling leaves outside.
Take it deeper and imagine hearing the sound or things that are more distant. For instance, imagine that you are at the seaside. Feel the gentle wind blowing against you. Listen to the friction as the forces of the wind brush past the trees. Observe the velocity it’s traveling. Is it calm and still, or is it strong and chilling?

Think like there is a hole located in your back that releases all kinds of tension or think as if there is a mild stream of water that goes through your body and cleanses it.

Imagine your body being filled by water and then flowing farther through your toes and fingers. Or you can imagine a push button at the top of your head. Once you have imagined pressing the ‘button’, all the toxins and negativities will be flushed away.
Meditation Using Mantra

1. Begin the mantra technique by controlling and practicing to breathe properly.
2. Think of a word or phrase (ideally, opt for a meaningless one such as “hmmm” for the reason that it is less distracting).
3. Shut your eyes close and breathe regularly for a minute before you start saying your mantra again.

4. Be conscious of your breathing and say your mantra again loudly.
5. Let your thoughts come and go at your own accordance.
6. For 15-20 minutes, say your mantra over and over again. Usually, you will enter into a deep relaxation state.
7. When you are done, carefully change your position and return to full awareness.
To control the manner you see and respond to stressful situations, follow these steps in this guide and it’ll help to reduce your stress.

Mind Techniques to Control Stress

This plan is given in separate steps that are written chronologically so that you will be able to start with the easiest before moving on to the ones that are more challenging.

It is advisable for you to follow all the steps in the order that they are written, but you can also opt to just implement only some of these steps and fit them into your daily activities. This can create an excellent impact in the way you respond with stress. Your overall well-being will also be improved.

Make a List

Identifying the source of stress is a good way to start fighting against it. You must try to discover what makes you anxious and stressed. Most likely, you will see that they are physical, mental, and emotional triggers. These triggers that I have just mentioned are totally related with your perspective in life.

Due to this, you should either change your outlook or modify your behavior when you are stressed if you want to control it.
**Stressful Situations**

A lot of stressful occurrences in our lives can result in stressful situations including relocation, divorce, job layoff, death of someone close to you and etc. However, compared to tragic events, it seems that daily life events can be more stressful. A very challenging job, out of control boss, difficulties in marriage, financial matters, and so on can bring about more anxiety and stress.

**Create a List**

A convenient step that will help you know the daily things that give you stress would be to create a list of instances that make your frustrated, angry, or nervous. Think deeper and try to learn about the specific events that make you stressed out. Does it make you recall a sad event in the past? What caused your stress specifically?

The end goal is to be familiar with your stress triggers so that you can regulate and lessen them.

**Know Your Response to Stress**

Many researchers who are researching on the subject of stress have been claiming that when we bottle up the stress to the extreme limit, it can result in cancer and other chronic ailments.

We can express our stress in many different ways including binge-eating, under-eating, rage, teeth-grinding, or swinging our feet. It can also be manifested by increased heart rate and having interrupted sleep.

If your try to lessen the things that trigger stress, you’ll see how the mentioned symptoms would also disappear.

On many occasions, we do not realize that we are even in a state of stress. It is of the essence to create a list of all stress symptoms that are personally-related and be familiar with them once as they emerge. In this way, you will be able to do all necessary actions as while you are experiencing it.
On the other hand, it is not enough to solely know the symptoms of your stress reaction. To modify them, you have to get out of your skin for the time-being and monitor your thoughts using a view from the outside.

This may not sound easy but when you are in a stressful situation, you can imagine yourself as if you are a person trapped inside a glass box. Outside this box there is lighting shone at various angles. If you look at it outside, you will see different shapes and shade of shadows being cast. All these represent varying perspectives and outlooks in life.

When stressed, you can act like a trapped person in the box and let your thoughts go uncontrolled. However, you can also choose to act as if you are outside the box by modifying and redesigning your thoughts and response to the event.

Next time you are stressed (in relation to the list of symptoms you have created earlier, monitor your thoughts from the outside and question yourself about how you can alter them.

**Deal with Your Stress and Neutralize It**

Many stressful life situations are brought about by anxiety or the feeling of dread towards the fact that you may not get to finish your tasks or duties. To surpass this, establish your priorities and plan your activities ahead of time according to their value, limitations, and deadlines.

Find a way to get over one task at a time. Do not attempt to finish all your activities at once. Make plans along with goals that are realistic. It will also help to set deadlines that you will be able to meet.

If you are very well aware that a certain road is likely to have moderate to heavy traffic, try to avoid passing along it or choose to pass there on non-rush hours. You can also opt to drive along another way or location. To make things even less complicated, you can also give up the idea for the time-being.

If you have guilt or remorse in your heart due to a thing that you might have done before, try to deal with it by facing the source of your feeling if it is possible. On the other hand, if you cannot do this, you can alter the way you look at the past.
Through this, you can somehow modify the past, learn from the wrong things you have committed, and then move on.

The aim is to be more sensible and practical. If you are aware that something can possibly stress you out, avoid it. Usually, it will be enough to lessen stress. However, if it is unavoidable, be more imaginative and think of a positive way that will help you deal with stress.

**Use Positive “Self-Talk”**

During stressful times, there may be plenty of self-talk thoughts that go through your mind such as:

“I have spent the whole day trying to finish my project but it’s still not complete. I have to submit this tomorrow. I don’t know what to do.”

Learn and practice the art of driving these negative ‘noises’ away by changing negative thoughts into positive and good ones. Know exactly when the mind attack starts and try to think of at least something positive that you can gain from the extremely stressful situation.
Talk About Your Stress

You should never repress all your anger or bottle your feeling all up. A rubber band, when stretched too tightly, will eventually snap. A possible dangerous creator of stress is repression and you not let it conquer you. Interact with other and share what is making you worried.

This will help you realize a lot about your response to stress. It will also help you release tension that you may have been holding back for too long. Future potential stressful events may also be avoided by doing this.

Incorporate Fun Into Your Daily Life

Finding the right balance between doing work and playing is just as essential to both your mental and overall well-being.

It is also an excellent way to get rid of different stress triggers that come from not having sufficient recreational activities that can silence and pacify the mind and get rid of stress.

Allot some special time that you will spend for your hobbies every day. It doesn’t have to be complicated. You can sing, prepare a meal, or even read. Try to identify yourself with a hobby if you do not have one. If you simply do not have a hobby to engage yourself in on a regular basis, use the time to bond and communicate with your family. Use much time to bond and communicate with your family.

Share what’s on your mind along with your fears. Also, try to spend an hour to meet your spiritual needs. You can do this either by reading, writing, meditating, or doing something creative that meets your emotional and spiritual needs.

It will also help to get your thoughts off work or other things related to it several hours before you sleep. Remember, the work stays in the office, period. This will help you get good sleep and harmonized mind.
Stay Away from Negative Things

A detached mind is perhaps the best way to modify external condition. Many people tend to have constantly fluctuating states of minds and emotional beings. In this case, depending on external factors, thoughts shift from positive (appreciation, contentment, happiness, and satisfaction) to negative (anger, sadness, hostility, and stress).

Positive warmth and great things in life will be received by a detached mind. With this, everything positive is allowed to enter your system while negativity is drained out of your life without affecting your well-being.

Detachment makes great sense, and it is also practical, especially when you understand the futility of altering your state of mind or mental condition as a response to negative outside factors.

Try your best to change your point of view, instead of being angry and stressed due to an external occurrence. Allow then to flow thorough you without detrimental effects.

Change the way you look at things, and your troubles will be gone. If someone becomes upset with you or shows selfish behavior, keep in mind that it is not his harsh words that can harm you, but it is your view of his words.

You have all the right to alter your point of view. No one can stop you from doing so. Change it and allow negativity to disappear.

Accept Things As They Should Be

Try hard to accept things that you have no control of, or things that cannot be changed. This may appear easy but many of us tend to fight or be upset and disappointed when we realize that we cannot do anything to alter things as they are. Being helpless is a bad feeling. At some point, we all have an addiction to control things.
When you free yourself from this kind of fixation on controlling things, you are subjecting yourself to the most mentally challenging tasks you'll have to deal with if you want to face fear and stress.

Not wasting your mental and emotional energy on unchangeable things in your life as well as to those of others is a wise thing to do. It is an excellent way to minimize a lot of stressful situations that may rise simply from that unhealthy outlook in life.