



Health Advice

Tips for women to reduce everyday stress

The coronavirus pandemic is particularly stressful for women – they are usually the ones who have to manage everything at the same time, such as working from home and homeschooling, work projects and relatives in need of care. Although many men also get involved in family tasks, it is mainly women who bear the double burden. Most of the time, the causes of stress cannot simply be eliminated, but there are lots of things that women can do to get through these challenging times and stay healthy.

Stress can make you ill

Stress can have health consequences, and not just in coronavirus times. Almost ten percent of women have reported suffering from depression or feeling depressed within the last twelve months. Burnout, anxiety or eating disorders are also typical consequences of stress. The older women get, the greater the impact psychological stress has on absence figures: in 2019, for example, women took more than seven days of sick leave as a result of this, statistically speaking.

Look after yourself

If you feel stressed, talk to your colleagues, communicate your working hours and really leave your work behind at the end of the day. Regularly allow yourself time just for yourself by taking short breaks in your everyday life or at work: for example, by trying something new – how about hula hooping or hormone yoga? A short walk will also help clear your mind.

Well-being in the workplace reduces pressure

Stress in the workplace can be reduced by a corporate culture in which women feel comfortable and welcome, which appreciates them for the work they do and provides services for the promotion of workplace health. Topics such as relaxation, nutrition and yoga are particularly popular with women. Flexible working hours as well as mobile working – and allowing fathers to reduce their working hours to spend time with the family – also help to improve work-life balance. This makes employees happier and improves performance.

Take a break from everyday life, switch off, allow yourself a moment of peace – here are three simple relaxation exercises for at home or the office:

- 1. Relax your muscles:** Stress can lead to tension. Jacobson's progressive muscle relaxation technique focuses on consciously tensing and relaxing muscle groups: Clench your fists firmly and relax them after around 5 seconds; pull your shoulders up towards your ears, hold the position briefly and drop them again; tense your buttocks, stay in the position for around 5 seconds and relax them again. Repeat the process once for each muscle group and consciously be aware of the relaxation that occurs after you let go. Work through all the muscle groups of your body in the same way, letting go for about 30 seconds between tightening.
- 2. Breathe consciously:** No matter how full the day is, allow yourself a few minutes of conscious breathing: Close your eyes. Inhale slowly through your nose and count to 4. Hold your breath for 7 seconds and then exhale forcefully through your mouth counting to 8. Repeat the whole process several times.
- 3. Journey through the body:** Sit in a comfortable position with your eyes closed. Now send your thoughts on a journey through your body: Start by directing your awareness to your feet. Move your attention inwardly to your ankles, your calves, your knees and so on to all parts of your body. Stay focused on each body part for about 10 to 20 seconds and consciously be aware of how they feel. Finally, let all the muscles in your body become heavy, and relax for at least 5 minutes before stretching in all directions.

Extra tip:

The meditation app 7Mind will help you find more peace and calmness in just a few minutes a day. You can do it whenever and wherever you like.