

Mission:
To protect, promote & improve the health
of all people in Florida through integrated
state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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STRESS MANAGEMENT KEY TO ACHIEVING HEALTHY WEIGHT

TALLAHASSEE—April is National Stress Awareness Month and the Florida Department of Health encourages Floridians to learn more about the physical and mental health benefits of stress reduction and taking steps to better manage stress.

“Stress is part of life and can challenge healthful decisions,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “By managing stress through healthy activity and food choices, Floridians can enjoy longer, healthier lives.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), stress is characterized as tension, mental strain or emotional strain resulting from challenging circumstances. Work demands, financial pressure and personal problems are some of the main sources of stress. Dealing with these stressors in an unhealthy way can lead to a wide range of illnesses long term and can increase the risk of serious conditions like stroke and heart disease.

Stress is also linked to unhealthy weight. Being at a healthy weight is related to a reduction in several serious health conditions including heart disease, diabetes, stroke (brain attack), and certain cancers. For those who are overweight, even a modest weight loss can have a positive impact on your health. Healthy weight can also impact your energy levels, sleep habits, self-esteem, psychological health and health care costs. According to the CDC, overeating is a coping mechanism for and often the food that is consumed is primarily junk food.

The department encourages Floridians to recognize stressors in their life and work to better manage stress. The CDC recommends managing stress through self-care including taking the following actions:

- Avoid drugs and alcohol.
- Find support.
- Connect socially.
- Take care of yourself:
 - Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet
 - Exercise regularly

- Get plenty of sleep
- Give yourself a break if you feel stressed out—for example, treat yourself to a therapeutic massage
- Maintain a normal routine
- Stay active. You can take your mind off your problems by giving—helping a neighbor, volunteering in the community, even taking the dog on a long walk. These can be positive ways to channel your feelings.

For more information on stress management you can visit the CDC's [Managing Stress page](#).

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Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, businesses and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about how to be active and make nutritious food choices, visit www.healthiestweightflorida.com.

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. The department is recognizing 125 years of public health in Florida with educational opportunities and events. Please visit www.flhealth125.gov for more information.

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