

Managing End-of-Semester Stress

What is stress?

Stress is a **NORMAL** emotional and physical response to events in our lives, resulting in unpleasant feelings such as anxiety, tension, and strain. Stress is any type of response we have to any kind of psychological, social or physical demand that has been placed on us. Stress can be just as much physical as it is mental and it definitely can take a heavy toll on our mental health and overall well-being. Stress is a very serious problem in our society and many people end up missing class, work, and/or visiting their physician or the hospital because of the medical consequences associated with it. As exams, final papers, final projects, and the holidays draw near, students often feel high levels of stress.

What are some of the symptoms of stress?

- Nervous movements or shaking
- Heart palpitations or a rapid heartbeat
- Heartburn, nausea, or stomach pain
- Tight muscles and muscle aches
- Difficulty sleeping
- Anger & irritation
- Poor memory and/or concentration
- Mental confusion

What are some helpful strategies for relieving or managing stress?

1. **Practice good time management and study skills**
2. **Don't wait until the last minute to study for an exam or begin an assignment**
3. Regularly block out a few hours each week for relaxation and rejuvenation
4. Take time to get and stay in touch with your spiritual self
5. Learn to say "No" to demands that aren't a necessity
6. Take care of the physical you
7. Practice visualization, self-talk, and deep breathing exercises
8. **Schedule a confidential appointment with a counselor in Durham Tech's Counseling Services office (Wynn Center, room 1209)**
9. Seek professional help from a licensed mental health provider.

Take charge of the changes in your life, pay attention to the warning signs of stress, and take good care of yourself. Build up your resistance to stress by staying on top of assignments and by practicing positive physical and mental health habits and strategies.

Be sure to pat yourself on the back for what you've accomplished so far this year, and **Best Wishes** to you as you finish the semester!

