



Good Neighbor Script

INSPIRATION FOR LIVING WELL FROM GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY | JANUARY 2026

How Stress Impacts Your Heart

Throughout life, it's common to encounter many forms of stress — caregiving, sitting in traffic, work pressures, relationship problems, financial crises, divorce, or the death of a loved one. While stress is a natural part of life, chronic stress can become a serious health condition that can take a toll on your heart health if left untreated.

Psychological stress is linked to a 40% to 60% increased risk of heart disease, according to a report in *The American Journal of Medicine* (AJM). The risk is greater in people with existing heart conditions or those at high risk for heart disease compared to healthier people.

How stress affects heart health

Here's how the two main types of stress affect your heart health, according to the American Psychological Association:

Acute stress. This stress is short-term and occurs suddenly. Examples include having a heated argument, rushing to meet a deadline, or slamming on the brakes to avoid an accident.

Acute stress triggers your body's "fight or flight" response, releasing stress hormones like adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. These hormones act as messengers between your heart and blood vessels, causing your heart muscles to squeeze harder and your heart rate to increase.

At the same time, blood vessels leading to your heart and large muscles dilate (expand), pumping more blood into these areas and raising your blood pressure. When the acute episode is over, your body returns to its normal state.

In people with heart disease, severe acute stress can also trigger chest pain, an irregular heartbeat, and even a heart attack, according to the AJM report.

Chronic stress. This is stress you continue to feel over a long period of time. It's like acute stress that never fully goes away. Over time, chronic stress can lead to long-term damage to your heart and blood vessels.

Chronic stress increases your risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), including high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke. Post-traumatic stress disorder

(PTSD) is a mental health condition that also increases your risk for CVD.

People with high levels of chronic stress are more likely to die from heart disease or stroke, according to the American Heart Association (AHA).

Stress and unhealthy behaviors

To cope with stress, you may do harmful things that further increase your risk of heart disease, including:

- Eating an unhealthy diet or overeating.
- Drinking too much alcohol.
- Not getting enough physical activity.
- Not taking medications as prescribed.
- Smoking.

Signs and symptoms of stress

Stress can impact nearly every system in your body. If you're experiencing any of these unexplained signs or symptoms, it may be time to seek help to get your stress under control:

- Body aches and pain, especially in the shoulders or lower back.
- Feeling angry, cranky, forgetful, or out of control.
- Headaches, including migraines or tension headaches.
- Lack of energy.
- Problems sleeping.
- Stomach pain or feeling sick to your stomach.

Reducing stress for better heart health

To manage stress, the AHA recommends:

- Exercising regularly. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity per week.
- Getting enough sleep. Aim for at least seven hours of sleep per night.
- Getting professional help for depression, PTSD, and other mental health conditions. Chronic stress is linked to anxiety and major depression.
- Maintaining social connections and spending time with people you trust.
- Practicing relaxation techniques, including mindfulness and meditation.

HEALTH & FITNESS

On a GLP-1? What to Eat and Avoid

GLP-1 agonists (like semaglutide) can be a great tool to help you lose weight. But because they change how much you eat and how long food remains in your stomach, it's important that you adapt your diet accordingly.

Avoid spicy and high-fat foods

GLP-1s cause food to remain in your stomach for longer. To prevent potential GI symptoms (like heartburn and an upset stomach), avoid spicy foods (like hot peppers and hot sauce) and high-fat foods (like fried foods, pizza, and whole-fat dairy products).

Focus on protein

When you lose weight, you want to make sure you're losing fat, not muscle mass. To best preserve muscle mass, a paper published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* recommends that you eat at least 0.5 grams to 0.7 grams per pound of body weight — every day. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, that's 75 to 105 grams of protein per day. Protein will also help you lose weight because it helps you feel fuller longer.

Prioritize fiber

GLP-1s help you lose weight by suppressing your appetite. But you want to make sure to include fiber, not only to help with satiety but also to combat constipation, a common side effect of the medication. (Enough means 25 grams daily for women and 38 grams daily for men — slightly less for those over 50.) Good sources of fiber include fruits, vegetables, whole grains (like oats, brown rice, and quinoa), and beans.



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JANUARY RECIPE

Buckwheat Pancakes With Apple Cinnamon Compote

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Serves
10 minutes	30 minutes	40 minutes	4

Buckwheat flour is a naturally gluten-free alternative to wheat flour that works exceptionally well in pancakes. With a rich, nutty flavor, this whole grain is also full of fiber, protein, and gut-healthy prebiotics. Topped with a warm, simmered apple, cinnamon, and maple syrup compote, this hearty and healthy breakfast will warm you from head to toe.

Ingredients

- 3 large apples
- 1/4 cup maple syrup plus 1 tablespoon (divided), plus additional for serving
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon (divided)
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 cup buckwheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup plain, unsweetened kefir
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla

Tools

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Peeler
- Chef's knife and cutting board
- Mixing bowls
- Whisk
- Spatula
- Large saucepan and nonstick skillet or griddle

Instructions

1. Prepare the apple cinnamon compote. Peel, core, and dice the apples, then place them in a large saucepan with 1/4 cup of maple syrup, 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon, and nutmeg. Add two tablespoons of water and bring the apple mixture to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and let it simmer for about 30 minutes or until the apples are tender and about 1/4 cup of liquid remains. Stir the mixture occasionally. NOTE: You can prepare this up to a day in advance and store it in the refrigerator.
2. While the apples cook, prepare the pancake batter. Combine the buckwheat flour, baking powder, baking soda, and remaining teaspoon of cinnamon in a mixing bowl. Whisk to combine the ingredients and set this aside.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the kefir, eggs, vanilla, and remaining tablespoon of maple syrup. Whisk well. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and whisk until everything is combined and there are no visible lumps of flour.
4. Heat a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Test the temperature by sprinkling one or two drops of water on the pan. When the water sizzles, the pan is ready for the pancake batter.
5. Pour 1/4 to 1/2 cup of batter per pancake into the hot skillet, depending on your preferred size. Let the batter cook for about two minutes, until bubbles appear. Flip the pancakes over to cook for about one more minute on the second side.
6. To serve, top each pancake with a generous scoop of apple cinnamon compote and an extra drizzle of maple syrup if desired.



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HEALTHY LIVING

How To Prevent Pneumonia



01

Wash hands often.



02

Sneeze and cough properly by covering your mouth or using a tissue.



03

Clean and disinfect well.



04

Practice social distancing.



05

Avoid cigarette smoke/smoking.



06

Get vaccinated against bacterial infections.



07

Get vaccinated against viral infections.



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Product Spotlight



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