

## A dozen ways to handle daily stress

Today's world produces plenty of stress. Life's little hassles mount up until you say to yourself, "If one more thing goes wrong today, I'll explode!"

At times when the pressure seems to be too much and you can't concentrate anymore, don't just reach for the aspirin bottle. Try one of these instant stress relievers.

- Take six deep breaths. Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth. Take the time to notice how your abdomen expands as you fill your lungs with air.

- Visit the Bahamas or any other pleasant scene from your past. How? Imagine it! Visualize the scene in detail. Stimulate your other sense to. Smell the salt air. Feel the warm sun on your skin. Hear the waves crashing on the shore. Taste the water. In just a couple of minutes you'll recapture the pleasure of actually being there.

- Stretch. Stand up. Raise your arms above your head. Stretch left and hold 1-2-3-4. Stretch right

and hold. Repeat several times.

- Hug someone. Four hugs everyday will do a lot to calm you down. Hug the kids, the dog, your spouse, the mailman. (Not necessarily in that order.)

- Change the scene. Walk to your window and watch the birds. Take a stroll around the shop floor. Go outside and breathe deeply for two minutes.

- Find a friend. Chose a patient soul, one who won't butt in or give advice, but listen to your complaints.

- Take an exercise break. Take a brisk walk at lunch. Climb the stairs instead of riding the elevator. When your mind is cluttered, move your body. Exercise will improve your frame of mind.

- Have a good laugh. Pull a joke book out of your drawer and read it. Visit with a co-worker who is known for a fine sense of humor. Or just laugh. Your spirits will rise immediately.

- Get a fresh outlook. Stress often comes from taking yourself

and the job too seriously. Lighten the load by asking (and answering) the questions, "What's the worst thing that could happen if...I made a mistake?" or "we missed the deadline?" The actual consequences are usually not nearly as bad as the ones we imagine.

- Finish something. Bugged down by lengthy and complex projects? Give yourself a quick sense of accomplishment. Pick a task you can easily finish in the next ten minutes. Then do it.

- Play. A few minutes spent playing brings renewed energy and concentration to the job. Use your break time to work a crossword

puzzle or play a computer game.

- Change your focus. Put your job concerns aside for five minutes, and concentrate on your life away from work. Plan how you will spend this evening or the weekend. Think of those friends you've been meaning to call and then decide when you'll do it. Check to see if you need to stop at the market on the way home. Think up a nice surprise for someone you care about. As your mind gets busy with these kinds of thoughts, you'll find that your stress will begin to fade away. In just five minutes or so, you'll be able to get back to work with new vitality.

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## Use care when using home cleaning products

Most cleaning products used in homes today are dangerous only when misused. The most frequent misuse is accidental swallowing by curious children. Never transfer cleaners into soft drink bottles or other containers that may seem harmless to children.

Regulations require that all hazardous substances include on their label the statement, "Keep Out of the Reach of Children." Under the kitchen sink is the poorest place to store household cleaners.

Keep products such as strong acids and alkalis away from your skin and eyes. Wear protective clothing such as gloves and an apron. Wash off immediately any products that you splash or spill on your skin.

Products containing flammable liquids should never be used near an open flame such as a pilot light on a kitchen range or gas clothes dryer, lighted cigarettes or furnaces.

Do not leave an aerosol (pressurized) container on a kitchen range, radiator, furnace, in direct sunlight or near other heat sources. Never puncture an aerosol container. Before discarding this type of container, hold the valve open until all the contents and gas have escaped. Never discard an empty aerosol container into a fire or incinerator, because some gas usually remains even in an apparently empty can. Heat causes the gas to expand and may lead to an explosion.

## Bulbs need proper care

Spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, tulips, hyacinths and crocus will stay in better condition for blooming next year if given the right care.

In most cases this means leaving the foliage on individual flower plants rather than cutting it off. The leaves provide the bulb with food needed to keep the plant healthy.

Leaves can be safely cut off, but only after they have ripened and are no longer actively manufacturing food for the plant.

When the foliage is cut from tulips, either separately or along with

## Recipe Stir-fried beef

340 calories per serving  
Preparation time: 15 minutes  
Marinating time: 15 minutes  
Cooking time: 10 to 12 minutes  
1 pound boneless beef sirloin, cut 1/4 inch thick  
1/2 cup and lite soy sauce  
3 tablespoons oil, divided  
8 ounces mushrooms, sliced  
1 package (6 ounces) frozen pea pods, defrosted  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
4 cups shredded lettuce

Slice sirloin diagonally across the grain into thin strips 1/4 inch thick. \* Combine sherry, soy sauce and cornstarch. Place beef strips and marinade in utility dish. Cover dish and marinate 15 minutes. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in wok or large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and pea pods; stir fry 3 to 4 minutes. Remove vegetables; reserve. Drain marinade from beef; reserve marinade. Add remaining oil to pan. Quickly brown beef strips (half at a time), stirring constantly. Add reserved vegetables and marinade to wok; cook and stir until sauce thickens. Serve beef stir-fry over lettuce. 4 servings.

Nutrient data per serving: 340 calories; 19 g fat; 75 mg cholesterol; 673 mg sodium; 5.6 mg iron.  
\*Steak will slice more easily if partially frozen for 30 minutes.

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If an accident occurs in the use of a hazardous substance, refer to the label on the product for the correct first aid procedures. Follow the directions carefully. If it is necessary to take a child or adult to the hospital or a physician's office because of an accident, be sure to take with you the container of the product that caused the injury. The information on the label will assist the physician in giving prompt and proper treatment.

This telephone number could save your life!

—Toll free: 1-800-452-7165—  
**Oregon Poison Control and Drug Information Center.**

Call this number free of charge any time, day or night on any day of the year, from any place in Oregon for help or information about poisons or drugs.

## Pruning should be done soon

A good basic rule of pruning shrubs goes, "If you see a need for pruning and you can get at it, then do it."

However, for those home landscapers who like to be precise, most pruning should be done either in the late dormant season (early March) or just after the plants bloom.

the flowers, the plant won't produce any blooms in the next growing season.

Other spring bulbs given this kind of treatment will also send up only leaves but produce no flowers in the following season.

Tulips also benefit if their seed capsules are picked off when they finish flowering. This will cause the plant to devote its energy to storing food for next year's flowers rather than to ripening seed. Flower stems can be left standing. Water the plants until the leaves begin to yellow.

## Walking yourself awake

When it's not even noon and you're nodding off at your desk, it could be more than fatigue that's got you down. Chances are all you need is a fresh air/fitness break. Escape the dry, suffocating atmosphere of the office at lunchtime by bundling up for a brisk walk around the block. Count on the crisp, cold air to startle your senses and give your complexion a healthy glow. Quick strides step up both your heart rate and your circulation, leaving you refreshed, revived, and ready to get back to work.

## How to ensure potluck safety

Ever wondered if it's safe to eat at a potluck dinner? When potluck food items are properly handled there is little cause for concern. Carefully cared-for foods will not cause illness.

To guard against potential hazards in potluck meals, the following food care tips are recommended.

- Were foods, such as baked beans, kept hot while being transported? Select appropriate containers to keep hot food above 140 degrees F if it won't be eaten for two or three hours.

- Was that tossed green salad fixed with clean hands? Hand-washing after use of the bathroom can prevent the spread of hepatitis virus and certain bacteria.

## Families changing with the times

Some people feel that family life is deteriorating, while others maintain that today's families are in the process of reorganizing lifestyles and kinship ties.

Regardless of your viewpoint, there's no questions but that families are changing as they seek new ways to deal with the stresses and demands of today's world.

The family is no longer seen as an economically productive unit. Now the family is seen more as a source of companionship and home is where adults and children meet between activities sponsored by schools, organizations and other institutions.

However, no matter how families change, the individual's needs for love, belongingness, identity and independence remain the same. Individuals look to the family for developing and maintaining physical and emotional health.

Statistics seem to support this view. For instance, married individuals are generally healthier than those who live alone. Over 95 percent of all Americans marry, but all can expect to spend part of their adult life alone because of separation, divorce or death. Most will remarry.

At a time when many adults view parenting as a less desirable role, a study of adolescents reveals a higher

sense of families, family loyalty and cooperation than a decade earlier, although this was less in families where the parents enjoyed higher educational achievement and occupational status.

Despite the place of marriage and family in peoples' lives, Oregon families are faced with both economic and social pressures which can increase health problems, confusion, violence and demoralization.

Nationally, only seven percent of all families fit the traditional picture of husband as primary provider for stay-at-home wives and their natural children. Economics is one reason for this change. Lower paying jobs mean real family income has decreased steadily since 1973. Where income remains the same, it now takes two people to earn it.

This is one of the big reasons for the entry of women into the work force. Figures show that 70 percent of mothers with a youngest child between 6 and 13 are employed and that 80 percent of children under 18 months have employed mothers.

This has occurred at the same time that supportive education and day care assistance for parents have decreased, despite evidence showing the importance of early childhood experiences to long-run success as an adult.

provide more light for the remaining branches.

Cotoneaster, firethorn, holly, flowering quince and hawthorne are in this category.

Shrubs such as redtwig dogwood, yellowtwig dogwood and coralbark maple are grown for their flowers. They must be pruned severely in early spring to develop vigorous shoots with young showy bark.

Prune early blooming shrubs and trees immediately after the blossoms have faded. Pruning will consist mainly of cutting out the older, branched or twiggy growth. These shrubs will grow new wood and form fruit or flower buds before the end of the growing season. Included here are camellias, deutzia, forsythia, lilac, moonlight broom and flowering plum.

Pruning prevents shrubs from becoming overgrown and formless. It also keeps plants healthy by removing dead, diseased or injured wood and improves the quality of the plant.

## Swimming builds strong bones

Until now, it's been thought that the only exercises to maintain strong bones throughout your lifetime involve weight-bearing activities like running or walking. A new study, though, shows that the most weightless exercise of all—swimming—can give similar bone-bolstering benefits.

Researchers at the Portland, Oregon, Veterans Administration Medical Center compared a group of older male swimmers with a similar group of nonexercisers. The swimmers had been doing laps an average of 4.6 hours a week for 13 years.

When the researchers checked the swimmers' spines, they found the vertebrae were 12 percent denser than those of the nonswimmers.

## Ice cream equals

A half-cup of ice cream is the nutritional equivalent of one-third cup of skim milk plus two teaspoons of oil or butter and three teaspoons of sugar.

It may be force exerted on the bones by the muscles that's important for increased bone mass," says Erick S. Orwell, M.D., the study's main researcher. "You can exert a tremendous amount of force on the skeleton by the muscular action of swimming."

And swimming's beauty for people with arthritis, osteoporosis or other weak spots is that it's relaxing and virtually injury-free (Clinical Research, January 1987).

Proper temperature and good hygiene will keep foods safe for potluck dinners. The safety of leftovers must be judged on the same basis.

Long-range studies show the pervasive influence from environmental disarray and family disorganization on adolescents and young adults. The ability of the family to function in the parenting role is jeopardized as American set world records among developed nations in divorce, teenage parenting and children under five living in poverty.

For instance, among 40,000 children born in Oregon in 1985, more than half had teen mothers, 7,000 of whom were unwed and one-third of whom were under the age of 19.

In 1985, single-parent families accounted for one-fourth of all family groups. One in six children lived in stepfamilies.

## How to cut your lawn

The arrival of spring means trimming time for home lawns and makes spring a good time to review lawn grass cutting guidelines.

How short and how frequently the lawn grass is cut is very important. If the grass is cut too often or too short, the individual grass plants may become weakened and die.

On the other hand, the lawn may go into shock if the grass is allowed to grow to a height of six or seven inches and then cut back to a height of two inches. This can happen because the major food producing portion of the plant has been removed.

Letting lawn grass become very tall before cutting also makes removal of grass clippings necessary.

Although children are amazingly resilient, they are vulnerable at all levels of society to the lack of stability with significant adults guiding their development. This is reflected in the number of child abuse cases and in national figures indicating that 35 percent of American children suffer stress-related problems at some point.

Managing lifestyles and family functions today demands more flexibility and innovation than ever before in making decisions and building relationships. People must become better at communication and conflict-resolution if the family unit is to meet the expectations of themselves and others.

A large buildup of grass clippings left on a lawn will smother it and encourage the buildup of grass plant disease.

Trim a lawn often enough that no more than one-third to one-half of the grass plant is removed by the mower. Mowing a lawn about once a week usually satisfies this requirement. Grasses should be cut back to 1.5 to 2 inches in height.

The mower should be sharp enough to cut the grass cleanly without bruising or tearing the leaves. Rotary mower blades require frequent sharpening. Height of cut by most rotary mowers is fixed by adjusting the wheels in holes or slots on the mower frame.

## Use care in yard work

Spring, as they say, has sprung, along with crabgrass, chickweed, aphids, weevils and other favorite companions of the home gardener.

American gardeners seem to be undaunted by such pests, though. In 1987, Americans rated gardening as their second favorite outdoor leisure activity, according to a poll by the National Gardening Association and the Gallup Organization.

The poll also reports that 59.5 million American households maintain their lawns and gardens with the aid of such outdoor power equipment as lawn mowers, garden tractors and tillers. One more statistic: in the same year, 1987, more than 170,000 people were injured in power equipment-related accidents, reports the National Safety Council.

While outdoor power equipment can make your work easier and your yard more beautiful, it can also lead to serious injury if improperly used. The National Safety Council, in accordance with the Outdoor Equipment Institute (OEI), suggests seven basic steps to follow in the purchase and use of outdoor power equipment.

1. Make sure your equipment has been tested and meets safety standards. Before you purchase new equipment, be sure it is marked with the OEI triangular seal. The seal indicates that an independent testing laboratory or third party has certified that the equipment meets nationally recognized voluntary safety standards, as published by the American National Standards Institute.
2. Be sure you know how to operate the equipment. Read the operator's manual thoroughly to find out where the controls are and what they do. Become familiar with the safety devices on the machine and be sure they are never damaged or missing.
3. Dress properly for the job. Wear substantial shoes, long pants, and close fitting clothes—no loose jewelry, unrestrained hair or anything that could get caught in a moving part.
4. Handle gasoline carefully. Store gas in a container approved by Factory Mutual, Underwriters Laboratories or some other reliable organization. Keep gas away from the house. Fill up your gas tank before you start, while the engine is cold. Wipe up all spills and never smoke while in the vicinity of gasoline.
5. Clean up and clear out your

work area before you start. Pick up anything that could be thrown by the equipment, such as trash, twigs, toys or rocks. Be sure that children and pets are out of the way until the job is done.

6. Operate equipment carefully, following recommended safety procedures. Use equipment only for its specified purpose. Avoid leaving equipment unattended. If equipment must be left unattended, turn off the engine and remove the key even if the machine will be used again momentarily.

7. Keep hands and feet away from moving parts. If repairing or unclogging equipment, turn off the engine first and disconnect the spark plug wire.

Your summer gardening should be enjoyable, not hazardous. Following the seven steps may not give you a green thumb, but they'll help to keep both of your thumbs, as well as the rest of you, safe and intact.

## Clean your drapes

During household spring cleaning don't forget your curtains and draperies. They will last longer if cleaned at least every two years. Soil build-up on curtains speed up sunlight damage, causing strength loss and rotting of fabrics.

Read labels for care instructions. Most polyester/cotton blend curtains can be machine washed and tumble dried with minimum shrinkage. However, to prevent shrinkage, line drying is often recommended, especially for washable open-weave curtains.

Since many draperies shrink five percent with the first cleaning, a double hem than can be let down is a good feature. Five percent shrinkage on an 84 inch panel means the curtain could be more than four inches shorter.

If you need to dry clean, costs will be less if you don't ask for pressing. Wrinkles usually disappear under the weight of the drape after hanging.

## Shop around for bargains

If you need something, use some time and energy to find the best buy. Bargain hunting may mean looking in several places such as catalogs, newspapers and different stores. Sometimes you can buy what you need at the least cost at secondhand stores or garage sales.