



EYLANI
FOUNDATION

&

Eylani Community
Health Network

EDUCATE | EMPOWER | ELEVATE | EQUITY



MENTAL WELLNESS SERIES

Stress vs. Anxiety

Understanding the Difference



Why It Matters

Everyone experiences stress. Anxiety is different. Understanding the difference can help you recognize what you're feeling, know when to take action, and get the right support.



Stress

A normal response to life's challenges.

Stress is your body's natural reaction to a demand or pressure. It can be short-term and often goes away once the situation improves.

Common Signs of Stress:

- ✓ Feeling overwhelmed or on edge
- ✓ Irritability or mood changes
- ✓ Trouble sleeping (usually short-term)
- ✓ Headaches, muscle tension, or stomach upset
- ✓ Difficulty concentrating
- ✓ Often related to a specific situation or event



Anxiety

A persistent feeling of worry or fear that may not have a clear trigger.

Anxiety is more than everyday worry. It can be longer lasting, more intense, and interfere with your daily life, even when there isn't an immediate threat.

Common Signs of Anxiety:

- ✓ Persistent worry or fear that feels hard to control
- ✓ Feeling restless, tense, or on edge
- ✓ Trouble sleeping (often ongoing)
- ✓ Difficulty concentrating
- ✓ Physical symptoms (e.g., rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, stomach issues)
- ✓ May occur without a specific trigger
- ✓ Can interfere with work, school, relationships, and daily activities



What You Can Do

- ✓ Practice healthy coping strategies (e.g., exercise, deep breathing, journaling)
- ✓ Set realistic goals and boundaries
- ✓ Take breaks and make time for activities you enjoy
- ✓ Talk to a trusted friend, family member, or healthcare provider
- ✓ Limit caffeine and alcohol, which can increase feelings of anxiety



When to Seek Help

Talk to a healthcare provider or mental health professional if you experience:

- ✓ Worry or anxiety that is persistent or getting worse
- ✓ Trouble functioning at work, school, or home
- ✓ Changes in sleep, appetite, or mood
- ✓ Feeling sad, hopeless, or losing interest in activities
- ✓ Thoughts of harming yourself or others (seek immediate help)



Learn More

Visit www.echnhchicago.com for more health education resources, tools, and community support.



Need Support?

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.

- Call or text **988** to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
- Chat at 988lifeline.org
- For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, call **911**
- To learn more about mental health conditions and finding care, visit www.nimh.nih.gov



Related Topics in the Mental Wellness Series:

- Managing Stress
- Building Healthy Habits for a Happier You
- Sleep and Mental Health
- When to Seek Support
- Mind-Body Connection



This information is for educational purposes only and is not medical advice.

It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Always consult your healthcare provider for personalized medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Sources:

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). I'm So Stressed Out! Fact Sheet: Anxiety Disorders. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Accessed October 2026.

