



## STRESS REDUCTION TECHNIQUES

### 1. Diaphragmatic Breathing:

- Sit up straight in a comfortable position. Inhale deeply through your nose so the breath moves down past your clavicle and chest before expanding your rib cage and into your stomach. Your stomach should expand upon inhalation and chest should not move
- Starting from your stomach, exhale slowly through your nose, with control, up through your chest, clavicles and out the nose
- As you exhale, pull your belly toward your spine to diffuse the stale air from your lungs
- Inhale for a count of four seconds, hold for two seconds and exhale for another count of four. Repeat until you feel relaxed

### 2. Progressive Relaxation

- Lie on your back with palms facing up by your side, let toes fall open to either side
- Individually contract different muscle groups for a few seconds, then release
- Remind yourself to relax each muscle group and release any tension that is being held

### 3. Meditation:

- Various techniques to choose from
- Join a meditation group
- Purchase an informational book, video or app

### 4. Yoga:

- Beneficial for many reasons other than stress reduction
- Join a class based on your level
- Strengthens the body and the mind, teaches you how to breathe

### 5. Time Management:

- Set priorities
- Organize your day
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities
- Don't overschedule

### 6. Exercise:

- Uses up the sugar secreted in your "flight or fight" response
- Helps maintain cortisol balance
- Allows for more "me" time
- Can be a social activity

### 7. Nutrition:

- Drink plenty of water, reduce or eliminate caffeinated beverages
- Avoid eating sugary, high GI carbohydrates and processed foods
- Eat a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables

