

## Look what you can do for your heart at [www.sistertosister.org](http://www.sistertosister.org)

- Learn the facts about heart disease
- Locate a nearby screening center
- Assess your personal level of risk
- Build a customized action plan
- Track your heart health progress
- Ask experts for advice
- Give and get community support
- Discover daily heart health tips...and more!



**Sister to Sister: The Women's Heart Health Foundation,** a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is dedicated to preventing heart disease in women by:

- Offering women free cardiac screenings to promote early detection and treatment of heart disease and its risk factors.
- Increasing awareness that heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States.
- Helping women make healthy lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of heart disease.

### **SISTER TO SISTER**

4701 Willard Avenue, Suite 223

Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Tel: 1.888.718.8033

Email: [info@sistertosister.org](mailto:info@sistertosister.org)

[www.sistertosister.org](http://www.sistertosister.org)

## Managing Stress



# YOU HAVE THE POWER TO HAVE A HEALTHY HEART



**SISTER TO SISTER**  
The Women's Heart Health Foundation

## The Stress/Heart Health Connection

Researchers are still studying the relationship between stress and heart disease risk. What we do know is that stress affects key risk factors for heart disease, such as high cholesterol and blood pressure. Stress may also cause some people to overeat, exercise less often, drink too much alcohol, and smoke—all behaviors that place us at greater risk for developing heart disease. Stress is especially problematic for women, who report experiencing higher levels of stress than men and are less likely to think they manage stress well enough.

*You owe it to yourself, your family, and your heart to slow down, relax, and de-stress.*

Are you too stressed? Stress can affect our mental, physical, and emotional health. Here's a list of warning signs:

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling short-tempered
- Exhaustion
- Loss of appetite or increased appetite
- Headaches
- Sleep problems
- Depression and anxiety

## Just Between Us...



## When to Go Against Your Instincts

- Instead of working harder, take a break when stress feels overwhelming.
- Resist the inclination to multi-task all the time.
- It's great to plan ahead, but you also need to be realistic and flexible.
- Don't stress about feeling, well, stressed! Remind yourself that everybody feels stress sometimes – that's normal.

## YES YOU CAN MANAGE STRESS



## 10 Heart Healthy Changes

1. Fit some “me time” into every day. All you need is a few minutes to clear your head by listening to soothing music, taking a hot shower or bath, or writing in a journal.
2. Spend time with friends and/or family.
3. Practice relaxation techniques such as meditating or deep breathing.
4. Exercise. Even 10 minutes can make a difference in your stress level.
5. Get enough sleep. Aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. Try going to sleep at the same time every night, and doing something calming before bed like reading a book.
6. Limit sugar and caffeine, especially after 4 pm.
7. Limit alcohol. Drinking too much raises your blood pressure and disrupts sleep.
8. Learn to say “no.” You do not always have to meet others’ expectations or demands.
9. Stop smoking. Nicotine acts as a stimulant and brings on more stress symptoms.
10. Be your own cheerleader. When you are feeling overwhelmed, remind yourself – even keep a list – of all that you do well.

GET MORE TIPS AT [SISTERTOSISTER.ORG](http://SISTERTOSISTER.ORG)