



Dateline's National Stress Test

Take this short stress inventory test to see where you rank.

Dateline's National Stress Test was designed in cooperation with a stress researcher at North Carolina State University. Answer the questions below to see how much stress you have and how you scored. In the past 12 months, have you:

1. Suffered a large investment setback? **55 points**
2. Had too little sleep on a regular basis? **45 points**
3. Started a serious relationship, or began dating again after a break-up? **45 points**
4. Dated several people? **35 points**
5. Are you the one doing the asking out? **5 points**
6. Are you a single parent? **70 points**
7. Had constant frustrations about paying the bills? **60 points**
8. Not enough time for family and friends? **40 points**
9. Not enough time for yourself? **45 points**
10. Experienced the death of a child? **100 points**
11. Made frequent short trips from home? **30 points**
12. Traveled for long periods of time? **10 points**
13. Had travel-related problems, such as delays and cancellations? **35 points**
14. Faced frequent performance evaluations in your job? **45 points**
15. Frequently have a difficult commute to work? **35 points**
16. Must give frequent public speeches? **40 points**
17. Started a new job or had major changes in your job? **45 points**
18. Had a major salary loss for you or your spouse? **60 points**
19. Suffered the death of a parent, sibling, spouse or close friend? **90 points**
20. Been responsible for a sick or elderly loved one? **75 points**
21. Frequently have trouble with your boss or co-workers? **50 points**
22. Quit or retire from your job? **40 points**
23. Frequently worked too many hours? **45 points**
24. Frequently had too many assignments or deadlines? **45 points**

- 25. Constantly competed to maintain your position? **50 points**
- 26. Had chronic illness or long-term hospitalization of a loved one? **80 points**
- 27. Had too many errands and not enough time? **40 points**
- 28. Frequently rushed your children to and from too many activities? **35 points**
- 29. Often contended with a difficult or misbehaving child or teen? **45 points**
- 30. Had frequent problems with computers, cell phones, or technology? **30 points**
- 31. Had a significant new expense, a major purchase or renovation? **45 points**
- 32. Frequently had to wait in lines or on the phone? **30 points**
- 33. Often contended with rude and/or poor service? **30 points**
- 34. Engaged in frequent dieting or felt major guilt about your weight? **35 points**
- 35. Had a pregnancy, miscarriage or abortion within the household? **60 points**
- 36. Experienced increased tension in a close relationship? **55 points**
- 37. Suffered impotence, other sexual problems or disagreement with your partner about sex? **55 points**
- 38. Had a marital separation or major relationship breakup? **70 points**

Total:

What Your Points Mean

280 or less – Stress is not a problem for you: You run a low risk of getting a stress-related illness.

281-780 – You are at risk of getting sick: stress can lower immunity.

781 and above – Get a check-up.

Ways to Combat Stress

You don't have to get hit by an earthquake or lose your job to suffer real stress. Life's everyday bumps and bruises can be tough enough. No matter how severe your stress is, there are healthy ways to combat it.

1. Listen to music, read, or write in a journal.

"In writing, try to get in touch with your feelings and try to make sense of what's happening to you," says North Carolina State psychology professor Kitty Klien, who teaches about stress and coping, and is the architect of Dateline's National Stress Test. "And it's more effective than a slot of the talk therapies."

2. Do yoga and meditation.

3. Exercise.

4. Spend time with family and friends.

5. Play with pets.

"It's a really nice feeling to have a very affectionate social relationship, even if it's not with another person," says Dr. Liz Brondolo, a psychology professor and blood pressure expert at New York's St. John's University.

6. Think positively and have some laughs.

7. Take time off.

8. Enjoy nature.

"Pay attention to things that are beautiful," says Brondolo. "The way a child's face looks, the way the sunlight on the water looks.

9. Eat and drink, but in moderation.

10. And, last but not least —sex.

"Just feeling loved is a huge stress reducer," says Pepper Schwartz, a sociology professor at the University of Washington, who has written numerous books on sexuality. "It's not a mystery when someone's in love that it's good for them."



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Page 3 of 3



This content is provided as a support resource and is not intended to replace recommendations from a physician or licensed mental health professional. Dial 911 for life threatening events.

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