



## Monthly Wellness SpotLight by PSA

IN GOOD HEALTH

### **ANXIETY AND STRESS ARE REAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS! AND THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!**

Anxiety and stress are serious medical conditions, just as serious as chronic medical disorders like diabetes and heart disease. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorder in the U.S.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health:

- Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S. They affect 40 million adults 18 and over (18.1% of the population).
- Although anxiety disorders are easily treated, only 36.9% of those impacted seek treatment.
- Anxiety disorders are caused from multiple risk factors including genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events.

And as for stress?

- 33% of people report extreme stress
  - 77% report stress that interferes with their physical health
  - 73% have stress that effects their mental health
  - 48% report trouble sleeping due to stress

#### **What's the Difference between Stress and Anxiety?**

Stress and anxiety are very similar, as both are emotional responses. The main difference is stress is triggered by an external event where anxiety is not.

Stress can be caused by a short-term factor, such as a deadline, or a long-term one, such as a serious health condition. People with stress experience both psychological and physical symptoms such as irritability, fear, anger, fatigue, muscle pain (especially across the neck and shoulders), digestive issues, and trouble sleeping.

Anxiety consists of constant worries that don't go away, even when the stressor is gone. The symptoms are nearly the same as stress.

Both stress and anxiety can be alleviated by physical activity, a healthy diet, and good sleeping patterns.

#### **There's an APP for that!**

We all have plenty of apps on our phones, many we don't even use! But do you have one to combat stress and anxiety? Did you know that there are many FREE Apps for this purpose? Below are two popular, FREE apps. Why not add one to your phone and start feeling better?

- 1. Calm**—Maybe you have heard of Calm. It's one of the most popular meditation apps available. It offers various meditation options as well as sleep stories. It's free to download for the basics, and the basics are likely all you will need.
- 2. Headspace**—Headspace is one of the best free apps to help you be more mindful and less stressed. There are plenty of guided meditations, including sleep meditations to help you fall asleep faster. The app is free and offers an option to upgrade, but like Calm, the basic version will likely be enough.