



What happens in your body...

When you're stressed

Being stressed isn't new. In fact, it goes back thousands of years to when humans had to hunt for their next meal. When food was slim - or a predator was lurking - the body released hormones (cortisol to name one) to jump into "fight or flight" mode, increasing heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing. And while we're probably not stressed for the same reasons anymore (goodbye bear chasing), our bodies still respond in the same way. Now, it's just more common for our stress to linger, especially when we find ourselves dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. This leads to a longer release of those hormones, increasing our appetite. The good news? Practicing mindfulness can help us stay grounded and can help quiet the brain's stress response.

WHAT TO DO

When you notice yourself feeling stressed, try the 5-4-3-2-1 technique to bring yourself back to the present moment.

5

Take a few deep breaths. Look around the room and name five things you see. They can be what catches your eye, or objects that are all the same colour or shape.

4

Keep breathing deeply. Pinpoint four things you can physically feel. Maybe it's the temperature in the air, the fabric of your clothing, or the sensation of sitting in your chair.

3

Close your eyes. Take a moment to listen. What sounds do you hear? List three - anything inside or outside counts!

2

Take another deep breath. Are there two items you can smell? It could be laundry, a burning candle, nearby food ...

1

Notice one thing you can taste. If you can't taste anything, you could grab a drink or use lip balm. Take a final breath and continue with your day.

