

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

NATIONAL RELAXATION DAY

Did you know that August 15 is National Relaxation Day? At times we all need a break from our busy lives and schedules. National Relaxation Day is a reminder that slowing down and reducing stress is good for your emotional and physical health.

While some level of stress is normal and even good for you because it motivates and pushes you to reach your potential, chronic, negative stress can cause mental and physical problems. Over time, too much stress can weaken the immune system and cause high blood pressure, depression, anxiety, fatigue, and a range of other illnesses.

Take care of yourself today and find ways to relax. Some techniques to reduce stress include the following:

- **Meditate.** Practice a simple breathing meditation. Sit upright in a quiet place and simply pay attention to your breath. Observe the wandering of your thoughts without judgment. Try this for five to 10 minutes once or twice a day. For soothing music or a guided meditation, try using a meditation app that you can download on your phone or tablet.
- **Exercise.** Whether walking, running, yoga, cycling, gardening, or weightlifting, daily exercise reduces stress, improves mood, and is important for physical and mental health.
- **Nurture yourself.** Put self-care at the top of your list, and do something that makes you relaxed and happy. Maybe it's getting a massage, reading a book, watching a movie, or talking with a friend.

