

One STEP Ahead of stress



December | Join us by registering at: ascension.org/GaviniCancer

Stress impacts many aspects of life, including your immune system and health outcomes. Although there are several factors that can increase your risk for cancer, research has shown increased stress can cause cancer tumors to grow or spread. In addition, chronic stress triggers the release of hormones that can lead to inflammation throughout the body.

Signs and symptoms of stress:

- Heaviness in the chest or shoulders
- General aches and body pains
- Headaches
- Grinding teeth
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Feeling tired, anxious, depressed
- Sleep problems
- Weight gain
- Memory and concentration difficulties
- Digestive problems

Assess your stress:

Scan the QR code to rate your stress using the National Institute of Health's Perceived Stress Scale



Reducing stress starts with a strategy

Take care of yourself by:

- Eating healthy and avoiding drugs and alcohol
- Exercising regularly
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Meditation and deep breathing
- Monitoring your mood

Prioritize your needs by:

- Showing self-love. Give yourself a break; we all make mistakes and experience ups and downs in life.
- Setting boundaries that allow you to stay true to yourself and your needs
- Engaging in activities that bring you joy and laughter

Seek out supportive relationships:

- Discuss worries and concerns with a trusted source.

Start a gratitude journal:

- Be intentional about recognizing what's positive in your life. Our mind is very powerful, and there's even evidence to suggest that our thoughts manifest (you get what you focus on).

Forgive often:

- Anger does more harm to you than to the other person.

Recognize when you need more help:

- Talk to a psychologist, social worker or counselor if stress is overwhelming and persistent, or you're battling sadness, depression, anxiety, anger and feelings of unforgiveness.



Mental health matters, and you are not alone.

Resources are available when:

- You are in emotional distress
- You are having a behavioral health or suicidal crisis
- You are worried about a loved one and not sure how to support that person, or where to get them help



Michiganders can dial 988:

Speak with trained counselors who provide free and confidential emotional support.

1-800-662-HELP (4357):

Connect with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's free and confidential treatment referral and information service.

Next steps:

To learn more, or to register for the December STEP Ahead virtual seminar, scan the QR code or visit ascension.org/GaviniCancer. For more information, call **248-849-2781**.



Ascension Michigan

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