

Guilt-free

Indulgence

Relax outside!

Studies show doing anything relaxing in the great outdoors—lounging on a chaise, soaking up the sun or taking a walk—doubles your body's ability to combat the negative effects of stress, says UCLA School of Medicine psychiatrist Hyla Cass, M.D.

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4 other quick-and-easy ways to Chase away stress!

Try the "calming" pill.

It's GABA. New research by the University of British Columbia in Vancouver shows this amino acid quickly moves from your bloodstream to your brain, slowing breathing and heart rate and relaxing your muscles so you feel calm all over. The study-proven dose: 250 mg. to 500 mg. daily.

Turn on the tap.

And run your hands under lukewarm water! This will relax you as the water helps distract you "from any worries and reminds you to go with the flow," says stress management expert Debbie Mandel, author of *Turn on Your Inner Light*.

Have a good cry!

Deep sobs open the chest and diaphragm, easing muscle tension and stimulating the release of endorphins, the same feel-good brain chemicals produced during exercise (without the workout!), notes cardiologist Stephen Sinatra, M.D., author of *Heart Sense for Women*.

Munch something crunchy.

Chomping on foods like carrots, apples or green beans releases tension in the jaw, making you mellower and more resistant to stress, experts say.

Did you know?

According to a recent survey, the most popular way to relax outdoors is walking! Biggest enthusiasts: women, who make up 58% of regular walkers.

—Barbara Hustedt Crook