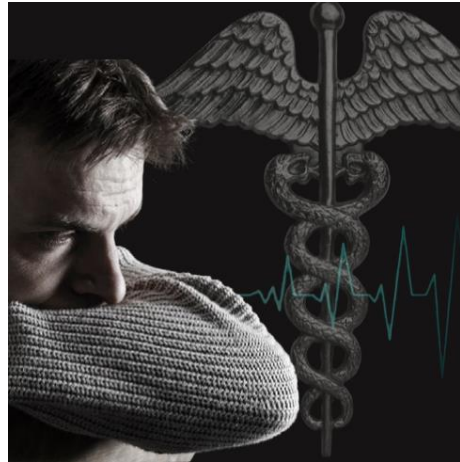


A Formula for Staying Healthy After Your Divorce

You may need to call a doctor, as well as a lawyer, when you're going through a divorce. The end of your marriage can affect your mental and physical health.

Divorce increases the risk for mobility issues and chronic conditions including heart disease and diabetes for both men and women, according to a study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.



On the other hand, the experience varies for each individual. You might feel overwhelmed by emotional and financial issues. You might find yourself thriving and enjoying life more.

Whatever your circumstances, the end of a marriage is a major transition. Try these suggestions for keeping your mind and body strong and fit.

Protecting Your Physical Health after a Divorce:

1. **Schedule screenings.** The stress of a divorce affects your immune system and make you more vulnerable to many serious health conditions. Be proactive. Discuss your situation with your doctor and follow their recommendations for preventive care and screenings.
2. **Keep a journal.** Divorce often disrupts your daily routines. That may be especially true if you relied on your spouse to encourage healthy lifestyle habits. A journal can help you track your activities and develop constructive patterns appropriate for your new circumstances.
3. **Watch your weight.** Intense emotions may stimulate your appetite or make it disappear. Follow a balanced diet based on nutritious whole foods including plenty of vegetables and fruits.

4. **Exercise regularly. Working out relieves tension and burns calories.** You may even make new friends while you're hanging out at your gym or yoga studio.
5. **Sleep well.** Negotiating custody and support arrangements can trigger insomnia. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime, create a dark and quiet environment that will help you to fall asleep.
6. **Manage stress.** Take time to rest and relax. Do breathing exercises or get a massage. Talk with your doctor if you find yourself engaged in self-soothing behaviors that may backfire, such as excessive drinking.

Protecting Your Mental Health after a Divorce:

1. **Accept your feelings.** You may be uncomfortable with some of your thoughts and emotions. However, **letting go of judgements and validating your experience is the first step in healing.**
2. **Think positive.** Try to look on the bright side and find reasons to laugh. You'll make life more pleasant for you and your children, if you're a parent.
3. **Seek support.** When a couple splits up, friends sometimes choose sides or drift away. Surround yourself with loved ones who care about you and give you constructive feedback. Join a divorce support group in your neighborhood or online if you want to talk with others dealing with similar issues.
4. **Meditate and pray.** Your spiritual faith can be a source of strength and comfort. Attend worship services. Read inspiring texts and discuss them with others.
5. **Find a hobby.** Enriching activities fight loneliness and help you forge a new identity. Take up wood carving or group sports.
6. **Create a budget.** Lost income and additional expenses can cause a lot of pressure. Consult a financial advisor or browse online for free budgeting websites such as Mint.
7. **Consider counseling.** Studies suggest that symptoms of depression and anxiety are usually temporary following a divorce. However, any relationship troubles could aggravate preexisting conditions. Talk with a therapist if you're concerned about your state of mind. **Help is available.**

Even if you're at peace with the end of your marriage, **a divorce can have a long-term impact on your mental and physical health.** Take extra care to safeguard your wellbeing so you can make the next stage in your life happy and satisfying.