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Valley Residents Take Broken Hearts Seriously Top Ten **Amazing** Ways to Manage Stress and Avoid "Heart Break"

A recent poll conducted by St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center revealed **approximately 60 percent of Valley residents believe that a person can die from a broken heart.**

The Valentine's poll results showed that **women are twice as likely as men** to believe this. Participants were also asked if they believed men or women recovered more quickly from a broken heart. Some 45 percent said women recovered faster, compared to 35 percent who said men are quicker to recover.

For years, doctors have known stress plays a key role in heart disease. Recent research, however, shows that a traumatic romantic breakup can unleash a flood of stress hormones that can cause life-threatening heart spasms. **This little-known condition is called Acute Stress Cardiomyopathy (see *attached press release*).**

For everyone looking to avoid the stress that comes with romance or just everyday living, here are the Top 10 Amazing Tips from St. Joseph's to help you stay well.

1. **Take a Deep Breath.** Deep breathing is an easy way to relieve stress and has numerous benefits for the body such as oxygenating the blood, relaxing muscles and quieting the mind. A recent study at Barrow Neurological Institute also confirmed that deep breathing reduces pain.
2. **Have a Dance Party.** Put on your favorite song, something upbeat that gets you moving, and dance. Sing at the top of your lungs, be silly, be funky and just have fun. It will get your heart beating, boost your endorphins, and provide comic relief to any stressful situation.
3. **Tense Up.** By tensing and relaxing muscle groups in your body, you can relieve stress in minutes. Start by tensing a muscle, such as your shoulders, for 10 seconds, then completely relaxing for 10 seconds. Repeat this on all muscle groups in your body.
4. **Punch a Pillow.** Whether it's meditation, sports, or using your pillow as a punching bag, find a way to productively and safely channel your anger.
5. **Watch Your Mouth.** Try to avoid using dramatic terms like "nightmare," "terrible," and "horrible." These terms will make you focus on the negative rather than the positive.
6. **Glass Half Full.** Take a moment to reflect on the things that you are grateful for. List three positive things in your life, you'll always find something to be thankful for.
7. **Enjoy a Downward Dog.** [Yoga](#) combines breathing, meditation, imagery and movement, giving you a lot of benefit for the amount of time and energy required. You can help manage stress with yoga.
8. **Remember the Good Times.** Look at old photos from your childhood or a fun trip you took with friends. Remembering some of your treasured moments will make you laugh, smile and relax.
9. **Hydrotherapy.** Relaxing in a hot bath relieves sore muscles and joints, reduces stress and tension, and promotes a good night's sleep.
10. **Just Forget It.** Try not to analyze a stressful event or situation over and over. This behavior can quickly become a dangerous and pessimistic coping strategy. Give yourself a few days to reflect, then forget the past, good and bad, and look to the future.

** This Valentine's telephone poll was conducted with 400 adults in January by West Group. The margin of error is plus or minus 5 percent at 95 percent confidence.*

— St. Joseph's —

