

CARING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

In the midst of the current pandemic, it is crucial to make your mental health wellness a priority just as much as your physical health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the following tried-and-true anxiety prevention and reduction strategies to better care for your mental health:

Take Care of Your Body

- Get plenty of sleep, eat well-balanced meals and exercise regularly.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Get moving—one of the best ways to relax a worried brain and activate a sense of calm.
- Practice mindfulness.
- Spend time in nature.

Avoid Excessive Exposure to the News

- Take breaks from watching, listening to and reading stories about COVID-19.

Maintain Hope and a Sense of Positive Thinking

- Unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
- Find new activities that you might enjoy to support a sense of normalcy.
- Be diligent about re-directing your thoughts from stress and fear toward health and togetherness, even virtually.

Connect with Others

- Share your concerns with others and how you are feeling with a friend or family member.
- Maintain healthy relationships.
- Create virtual relationships (reach out to friends on Facebook or through FaceTime; send a text to those with whom you haven't spoken in a while and/or call a loved one).
- Take an active role in keeping all household members as healthy and positive as possible during this time of uncertainty.

Avoid Negative Thinking and Mitigate Stress

- Employ relaxation techniques when stressed, such as deep breathing (inhale deeply, exhale slowly), stretching and meditation.
- Remember ... the more you fret, the worse you feel.
- Exercise more.

Seek Professional Care If Needed

- Contact your doctor or a mental health professional if you experience anxiety symptoms that interfere with work, close relationships, socializing or taking care of yourself and others.

REMEMBER ... If you are experiencing an immediate crisis: please call your primary care provider or 911

