

Maintaining Wellness During the COVID-19 Pandemic

We put together a short list for some of the currently available resources to help you as you navigate and cope with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

This list is organized in the way we thought makes sense, no chronological order is intended. Pick whatever interests you or seems relevant to your own needs. Distribute as you wish, no copyright here.

First, a cheat sheet:

Be Prepared

- Review all relevant facts about the transmission of COVID-19 and its characteristics.
- Stay updated (but don't obsess) with the most recent information and recommendations released by the CDC.
- Limit media exposure.
- Learn how to use PPE.
- For *front liners*: As we approach surge capacity, start thinking about and discussing ethical considerations that will come up when making decisions for triaging patients.
- For *volunteers*: Make sure you know exactly the role you are assigned and accordingly the type of PPE you need.
- You will need to take care of yourself first - reduce risk to patients and colleagues.
- Prepare your family, too.

Take Care of Your Patients, AND

- Be mindful of physical strain of PPE.
- Know when and how to conduct physical isolation and who to ask.
- Be vigilant and strictly in compliance with infection control procedures. Remind others.
- Practice and repeat the procedures you must follow – create muscle memory, it will reduce stress.
- Remember your basic needs: hydration, food and sleep.

Manage Stress

- Maintain self-monitoring and pacing.
- Check in with colleagues, family and friends.
- Take brief breaks and use relaxation exercises, or do something you find comforting (a walk, music, reading).

- Peer consultation and supervision.
- Seek out accurate information and help.
- Learn about new and alternative ways to manage stress.
- Live in the moment rather than projecting future worries.
- Direct tension and worries toward actual threats.
- Train and maintain positive self-talk.
- Learn focused meditation and relaxation.
- Focus on what you do best and is within your power.
- Accept what cannot change.

Please, Please Don't

- Work around the clock or without breaks.
- Get carried away with the idea that you are “not doing enough.”
- Isolate yourself.
- Consume too much caffeine and/or sweets.
- Get caught up in negative self-talk that would obstruct self-care. For example, “needs of patients are more important than the needs of helpers” or “Only I can....” or “it is selfish to take time to rest” etc.

When Home

- Seek out and share social support.
- Check in with others, it's okay to talk about work experiences.
- Relax, recharge and enjoy the company of family and friends – even if virtually.
- Avoid too much caffeine, which makes it hard to sleep.
- Remember physical exercise.
- **DO NOT**
 - Use alcohol, illicit drugs or excessive prescription drugs.
 - Negatively look at your work experiences.
 - Keep busy to distract or try to forget. You won't.
 - Stay silent and avoid talking about your work experience with others.

References

Managing healthcare workers' stress associated with the COVID-19 Virus Outbreak. National Center for PTSD. March 2020 <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/index.asp>

Sustaining the well-being of healthcare personnel during Coronavirus and other infectious disease outbreaks. Center for Study of Traumatic Stress, Dept of Psychiatry, Uniformed Service University. Bethesda, Maryland. March, 2020 <https://www.cstsonline.org/>

Coronavirus and Mental Health: Taking Care of Ourselves During Infectious Disease Outbreaks. [American Psychiatric Association](#).

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Resources for Coping and Wellness

During COVID19 Pandemic

Coping, Wellness:

- [Brene Brown](#): “Unlocking Us” podcast
- [NPR Tiny Desk Concerts](#): To calm your mind
- [Online Therapy](#): for first responders/healthcare workers
- [Ten Percent Happier](#): Go to [this link](#), open account, use gift code HEALTHCARE to download app and get 6 months free (meditations and practical teachings). Also includes free [Coronavirus Sanity Guide](#)
- [Free Guided Meditations](#): By a physician, created for the Coronavirus crisis
- [Coronavirus Anxiety](#): Toolkit developed to manage Coronavirus anxiety including free meditations
- [Staying Healthy](#): Tips summarized by a physician
- [Center for Mind-Body Medicine](#): Webinars showing mind-body skills groups, first on 3/27
- [SAMHSA Training and Resources](#): Including material on compassion fatigue, telepsychiatry, managing anxiety, dealing with opioid replacement issues

Peer support:

- [Psychiatry in the Era of CoViD-19](#): Online closed physician sub-group for members of Psychiatry Network, for discussions about CoViD-19 and psychiatry
- [Psychiatry for All Physicians](#): Online closed physician group for all specialties interested in learning about psychiatry

Helpful Apps:

- [Headspace](#) app: paid version currently free to end of year (need NPI #)

- [PFA Mobile](#) (VA) and [PFA Tutorial](#) (U. of Minnesota) are two apps about administering psychological first aid
- [UCLA Mindfulness App](#): free app
- [Insight Timer](#): free app, social network for meditation

Exercise:

- [Peloton](#): use of app extended to 90 days (usually 14 days)— you can use on treadmill, outdoor runs, bike, lots of floor exercise, yoga and meditation
- [Pure Barre on Demand](#): 60-day free trial (usually 30 days), click on 30-day trial, use promo code EXTENDEDTRIAL and trial will go to 60 days
- [Free Barre Fitness Classes](#): links to YouTube videos
- [Daily Burn](#): 30-day free streaming trial

Support for Children:

- [NPR segment](#) for kids/families to learn about CoViD-19
- [Nationwide Children’s articles](#) and [podcast](#): How to talk to children about CoViD-19
- [Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress](#): Helping homebound children
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#): Parent/caregiver helping families cope
- [The Autism Educator](#): Education about Coronavirus for children with autism
- [Disney Plus](#) for children: *Brain Games, National Geographic*
- [PBS](#) for children: *Wild Kratts, Xavier Riddle, Reading Rainbow, Between the Lions, Peg + Cat*
- [Kids Activities Blog](#): Long list of educational companies offering free subscriptions
- [The Science Mom](#): Daily 2-hour educational videos about science
- [Listing](#) of Educational Math Websites: 60 websites
- [Virtual Field Trips](#): Over 30 trips for children
- [Libby App](#): Access thousands of e-books and audible books from the public library
- [Cleveland Inner City Ballet](#): Free virtual ballet lessons
- [Museum Tours](#): List of free virtual museum tours (also check your local museums)

- [Kennedy Center](#): Learn to draw with Mo Willems, artist
- [Cincinnati Zoo](#): Daily videos with featured animals
- [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#): Free yoga and mindfulness videos (and on [YouTube](#)), [app](#) free for 2 weeks
- [Go Noodle](#): Movement and mindfulness videos
- [CLI Studios](#): Learn dance routines by watching videos
- [Grief and Children](#): Brief article in AACAP
- [Difficult Conversations](#): From Bright Horizons

Medical Institutions

- [WHO Guide for Psychological First Aid](#)
- [MGH Psychiatry Guide to Mental Health Resources: for COVID-19](#). Live document **updated daily.**
- [Mass General Hospital Guide for COVID-19](#) – webpage
- [Anxiety and Depression Association of America](#)
- [APA Resources](#)
- [CDC Information/resources](#)

For Patients:

- [Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress](#): Comprehensive list of patient resources
- [UCLA Center for Autism Research and Treatment](#): Comprehensive list of resources for addressing CoViD-19 issues for patients with autism
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#): 24/7 helpline for assisting patients in finding referrals to treatment

For Trainees:

- [Virtual Resources for Psychiatry Education](#): From the University of Minnesota
- [COVID19 Harm Reduction Guidelines for Substance Use](#): From the Yale Program in Addiction Medicine

- [Mental Health and Psychosocial Aspects of CoViD-19 Outbreak](#): Can use to help you address your patients
- [ADMSEP E-Modules](#) (Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry): Clinical discussions and cases, for medical students but helpful nonetheless, particularly for subspecialties (e.g. child psychiatry or geriatric psychiatry)
- [Psychiatry Network Webinar on Telepsychiatry](#): Discussion about the most commonly asked questions when starting telepsychiatry

Miscellaneous:

- [Psychiatry of Pandemics: A Mental Health Response to Infection Outbreak](#): Prescient book, published in 2019!

Again, we are truly grateful for the valuable work done by Dr. Christina Girgis, MD, Associate Residency Program Director at Loyola UMC, Chicago, IL.