

Provider Self-Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic

Use this collection of self-care reminders and tips to help you balance home and work demands while facing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's a marathon

This pandemic needs to be fought at a slow and steady pace. Your patients and family need you at your best. Keep yourself fueled with sleep, healthy food, energy and a positive attitude. You are on a team at work and home, remember to utilize your team members. It is okay to ask your team members for help when you need it.



Breathe deeply

Deep breathing can help you calm down and improve concentration. Throughout the day, take several deep, mindful breaths, especially when you are feeling anxious or stressed. Several apps are available to guide you through breathing exercises if needed.

Eat healthy food

Bring healthy food to eat at work to prevent unhealthy eating. Don't eat a lot of sweets or consume more than your normal amount of caffeine.

Get sleep

Ensure you get adequate sleep each night by practicing good sleep hygiene: Set the same sleep/wake schedule, no technology in the bedroom, keep bedroom cool and dark, have a relaxing bedtime routine, avoid caffeine after lunch, get some sunshine during the day, and try to limit exercise two hours before bedtime. If you work nights, sleep hygiene recommendations are even more important.

Exercise daily

Make exercise a priority to help you handle stress and have the energy needed for strenuous days. Exercising at home can present challenges. Utilize free exercise videos available during the pandemic – try something new! Take a walk or go on a hike. Play catch with your kids. Even just a few minutes a day can be enough.

Meaningful connections

Continue to have meaningful connections via phone, face chat apps, skype, digital hangouts, etc. Host and attend virtual dinner parties and social hours to reduce stress from social distancing and stay connected to people.

Take breaks

Plan and take mini-breaks for yourself and your team at work to help keep people calm, maintain energy and improve focus. Take a moment to go outside for fresh air and sunshine. Plan for down time at home to help you replenish emotionally and physically.

Keep structure at home

The transition to work-at-home or online schooling can be a challenge. Establish work/school space for those activities and a plan to help each person maintain focus and be productive. This is a new environment for many, so if it doesn't feel right, make little changes along the way.

Be flexible

Just as stretching helps maintain and improve muscle function, being flexible during a stressful situation can make life easier. Think outside the box, flex, adapt, ask for support, evaluate, modify and move forward.

Handle anxiety

Anxiety is normal during such a challenging experience. Taking action regarding the things that you are anxious about is the best treatment. Talk with family members about childcare and financial issues; address concerns about patient care and institutional issues with work colleagues. Use self-talk to help keep attitude and worry in check. Listen to music or read books. Limit time spent on social media and watching the news. Set aside dedicated time to acknowledge and accept things you worry about.

Keep focus and perspective

Know what you can control. Focus on the present. Find ways to be grateful and to help others outside of work. Find support in your beliefs and faith.

Ask for help when you:

- Have trouble focusing on daily activities and responsibilities
- Feel helpless or hopeless
- Have anxiety that makes you feel out of control
- Find it hard to manage emotions
- Are not sleeping well
- Become increasingly negative

Visit our website for more information about support groups, clinical trials and lifestyle information.

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