



MANAGING STRESS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) impacts everyone differently. It has been a stressful and uncertain time for many of us, commonly eliciting feelings of fear and anxiety, isolation, exacerbating pre-existing symptoms, as well as causing significant disruptions in our daily lives. It's important to actively engage in strategies to help us stay well during this difficult time.

10 TIPS FOR MENTAL WELLNESS

- **SET MEDIA BOUNDARIES:** Limit the amount of time you spend engaging with news or social media related to COVID-19; repeated exposure can exacerbate stress and anxiety
 - o *try to avoid news completely before bed*
- **TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY:** get enough sleep (7-8 hours), try to eat nutritious foods, drink more water, take prescribed medications, limit substances/alcohol/caffeine
- **MOVE YOUR BODY:** stretch, exercise, go for a walk in the fresh air
- **MINDFULNESS:** pause and connect with the present moment; this will also help you shift away from ruminating about the past or worrying about the future
 - o *Need help? Try an app such as HeadSpace, Insight timer, or Calm*
- **CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF:**
 - o **NOTICE AND TRY TO LIMIT UNHEALTHY AVOIDANCE BEHAVIORS:** excessive eating, drinking, smoking, drug use – these worsen stress in the long-term
 - o **MAKE TIME FOR HEALTHY ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY:** reading, drawing, puzzles, yoga
- **RELAX:** practice activities that promote relaxation, such as deep breathing or meditation
- **TRY TO RE-ESTABLISH ROUTINE:** structure and predictability can help reduce stress
- **STAY CONNECTED WITH OTHERS:** call, video-chat, or text while practicing social distancing
 - o *Talk about how you're feeling with someone you trust*
- **PRACTICE DAILY GRATITUDE:** write down 3 things that you are grateful for or that are going well
- **STAY INFORMED:** Utilize sources that provide accurate facts about COVID-19, such as:
 - o [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
 - o [State of Connecticut](#)
 - o [New Haven COVID-19 Hub](#)
 - o [Yale New Haven Health Hotline](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [SAMSHA: Social Distancing, Quarantine, & Isolation](#)
- [CDC: Managing Stress and Anxiety](#)
- [How to talk with kids about COVID-19](#)
- [Food Resources for New Haven Children Under 18](#)

