



Healthy Ways to Cope With Stress

May is Mental Health Awareness Month! The continued COVID-19 pandemic can disrupt our social connection, healthy habits, and overall well-being. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations, and stress during an infectious disease outbreak might include: fear or worry about your own health and the health of loved ones, changes in eating patterns, changes in sleeping patterns or difficulty sleeping, difficulty concentrating, worsening of chronic health problems, lower than normal physical activity, or increased reliance on unhealthy habits.

Establishing healthy ways to cope with the stress will ultimately make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. To support yourself and loved ones during this pandemic:

- **Take care of your body.** Eat healthy and well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.
- **Stay mentally healthy.** Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. For relaxation, light a candle or set-up a diffuser with a calming scent, such as lavender.
- **Practice mindfulness.** Take deep breaths, stretch, workout, or meditate. Use online resources such as on [LinkedIn Learning](#), for free learning, meditation, and virtual exercise programs. Surround your space with bright colors that bring positivity.
- **Create a routine.** Log your healthy habits on the [HealthAdvocate](#) website to maintain accountability.
- **Make time to unwind.** Pursue activities that you enjoy such as reading a book, cooking a healthy meal, taking a walk outside, or playing games with loved ones. Listen to calming sounds, such as nature sounds, when going to sleep.
- **Connect with others.** Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling. Reference resources or articles on managing stress through the [HealthAdvocate](#) website.

- **Get help.** Call your healthcare provider or the Employee Assistance Program if stress gets in the way of your daily activities.

This information has been offered by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).



24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, CA 90263 | Phone: 310.506.4000
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