

STAYING HEALTHY

COVID-19 has undoubtedly changed many of our daily routines. With this in mind, we are sharing an article below with tips to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle and routine while we have adapted to limiting exposure to COVID-19¹:



- **Stay active:** The gyms may not be open, however, there are lots of safe alternatives to getting physical activity without going against the preventive best practices recommended by the CDC like social distancing and avoiding large crowds. Aerobics can be done successfully at home. Another important point to consider is that avoiding crowds does not mean avoiding nature. Going for a brisk walk or jog outside in uncrowded areas outdoors is still considered relatively safe. Push-ups, sit-ups, jumping-jacks and more exercises are great ways to stay fit away from the gym.

- **Adequate sleep:** Good sleep is essential to our overall health. According to The National Institutes of Health (NIH), a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the nation's leading medical research agency: "Immune system activation alters sleep, and sleep in turn affects the innate and adaptive arm of our body's defense system." While the amount of sleep needed for good health and optimum performance mostly depends on the individual, the CDC recommends adults age 18-60 years get seven or more hours of sleep per night.



- **Diet and nutrition:** Practicing self-discipline and avoiding "emotional eating" due to stress that may be related to the drastic changes surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affects our lives is imperative. According to the CDC, whole foods like dark, leafy greens, oranges and tomatoes—even fresh herbs—are loaded

with vitamins, fiber and minerals. Make it a habit to try to eat more whole nutritious foods instead of processed snacks or fast food.

- **Self-care:** Take time to take care of yourself. Be supportive and suggest the same for those close to you. Meditation, relaxation, quality time with family, personal care of yourself promotes overall wellness.
- **Healthcare maintenance:** If you have medications prescribed for any condition, be sure to take them as directed by your provider. Chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma and many others should be kept in check with taking your medications as prescribed. Be sure to reach out to your healthcare team with any concerns as well. In the age of COVID-19, many providers offer telehealth solutions if you want to speak with a provider about a health concern unrelated to COVID-19.
- **Cope with stress and anxiety:** Positively cope with stress and anxiety induced by new precautions we must all now take to combat the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. Positive coping mechanisms would include exercise, meditation, reading, further developing certain skills or hobbies etc. Use this era to increase your daily repetition of these positive activities and develop new or even *better* routines than you may have adhered to prior to the emergence of the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Stay connected:** Talking with loved ones while in isolation can help reduce the anxiety and instances of feeling down. Take time to utilize the multitudes of technologies and apps (many free) that can help you stay in touch with those you love. Our busy lives before the COVID-19 may have limited how often we connected with distant loved ones, now's the time to fully exploit these modern capabilities for fellowship, companionship, and camaraderie.



The guidance above is to improve overall health and wellness. Please be aware that although eating nutritious foods, physical activity, adequate rest and taking care of our mental health makes us more resilient, it's not a cure nor does it guarantee immunity from contracting COVID-19. In addition to these suggestions, first and foremost be sure to practice CDC guidance on social distancing, self-care, self-quarantine, wearing of cloth masks when social distancing is not possible and talking with your provider about any concerns you may have regarding your health.

¹Source: Joseph Jones (Madigan Army Medical Center) https://www.army.mil/article/235263/COVID-19_lifestyle_tips_to_stay_healthy_during_the_pandemic