

# Take Time to Care for Yourself

Following CDC guidelines — stay at home, practice social distancing, wash your hands often, and sanitize items that are touched often with an [EPA-approved disinfectant\\*](#) — is the most important thing you can do for yourself now. But caring for your emotional well-being shouldn't be far behind. Here are some suggestions and resources to help you care for yourself and your family.

## Self Care Tips

- **Notice and accept how you feel.** Feelings of stress, anger, worry, sadness, etc., are to be expected. People respond to pressure differently, so be patient with yourself and others.
- **Care for your body.** Eat regular meals, stay hydrated, take medications and vitamins regularly, get enough sleep, and exercise.
- **Give and receive support from loved ones.** Remind your family and friends to eat, drink and sleep. Watch them for signs of stress. Encourage each other, and be ready to listen to those who need to talk. Allow them to do the same for you. We are all in this together.
- **Actively manage stress.** Have a plan to manage your stress. Exercise, meditate, pray, walk outside (distanced from others) or talk to a friend or therapist. Do what works best for you and try to head off distress before it becomes harder to manage.
- **Stay connected to loved ones.** Connect with people

who will support you during this time. Use video chat to safely spend time together. Isolation can magnify feelings of worry and anxiety.

- **Take breaks.** Give yourself a rest from work activities and stressful tasks. Do something that you enjoy that relaxes you. It may be hard to make the time, but resting will help you be more effective when you return to work.
- **Limit media exposure.** While it's important to stay informed, too much time with worrisome material will increase your stress. Choose a few sources of reliable information and set a time limit.
- **Avoid self-medicating.** During a crisis, it can be especially tempting to smoke, drink too much or use other substances to deal with stress. Avoid coping mechanisms that can compromise your immune system. Give your body its best chance to stay healthy.
- **Take advantage of free resources to help you.** You'll find a list on the following page.



## Family Care Tips

**It's tough to manage your own stress when you are also worried about your family. Your loved ones can benefit from most of the tips listed at left, and here are some more ideas.**

**Educate the family about good health habits.** Empower your family with the knowledge and tools they need to stay healthy. Show children how to wash their hands for 15-20 seconds — the length of the *Happy Birthday* song twice or the *Alphabet* song once.

**Talk to family and children about the virus.** Ask them what they have heard and address misconceptions. Encourage them to share their concerns and feelings by talking or drawing. Provide them with accurate, age-appropriate information. Talk in a comfortable place, use a calming tone, and emphasize that changes in routine are to help contain the spread. Check back in with them regularly.

**Encourage a routine.** Children benefit from a routine that lets them know what to expect for the day and makes a scary situation more predictable. Post a schedule that includes meals, playtime, learning activities and chores.



## Wellness Resources

**Exercise and stress relief:** The [Are You a Well Being](#) blog offers information about staying fit, reducing anxiety, staying connected with loved ones while social distancing, shopping tips to avoid exposure and more.

**Texas Health-y Home Cooking:** Check out the [Are You a Well Being](#) blog and [Pinterest](#) for a weekly series of healthy recipes, at home meal prep, and more.

### Questions about coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Call the Texas Health Coronavirus Hotline Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to speak with a nurse at 682-236-7601. For more information, visit [TexasHealth.org/CoronaVirus](https://www.texashealth.org/coronavirus).

For more information on health and wellness, follow us on social media:



### Educational Websites for Kids

These sites offer free learning content for kids:

[Kids.NationalGeographic.com](https://kids.nationalgeographic.com), [PBSKIDS.org](https://pbskids.org), [ScienceDaily.com](https://sciencedaily.com), [educationworld.com](https://educationworld.com), (Smithsonian) [TweenTribune.com](https://tweentribune.com), and [Scholastic.com/learnathome](https://scholastic.com/learnathome). [GoNoodle.com](https://gonoodle.com) has free exercise videos for kids, and [Cosmickids.com](https://cosmickids.com) offers free yoga and mindfulness videos.