

Health and wellbeing support.

Protect your health and wellbeing

Looking after your health and wellbeing is especially important as we respond to coronavirus.

You may be worried about the impact of the virus on your own health, as well as for your family, friends, colleague or patients. You may be bored, frustrated or lonely.

The following tips and advice help you to keep on top of your wellbeing and cope with how you may feel.

[Every Mind Matters](#) has published guidance to help maintain your mental wellbeing if you need to stay at home. It includes [10 tips](#) to help if you are worried about coronavirus including connecting with others, talking about your worries and getting enough sleep.

- Protect yourself by following [Public Health England's guidance for hand hygiene](#)
- Read the [five ways to wellbeing](#)
- Stay connected with family and friends
- Talk to children and vulnerable relatives about how they can protect themselves
- Visit the [Mental Health Foundation](#), and [Mind](#) websites for other helpful tips and advice

Looking after each other

We all respond differently when stressed, but there are many ways we can look after each other:

- Check-in with your team regularly. Pick up the phone rather than email when you can
- Have virtual coffee breaks with colleagues over video
- Practice mindful listening. Take the time to acknowledge how someone else is
- In times of high stress, it's easy to let frustrations get in the way. Pause and give yourself space to respond in a skilful and kind way
- Consider setting up a team WhatsApp group
- Recognise when you or your team are stressed or fatigued – for example noticing when others become more withdrawn, argumentative or tearful

than usual. [Personality profiling](#) can help identify stressors, responses, and solutions.

Helpful tips for working from home

- Prepare for work in your usual way
- Schedule time to transition between work and home life
- Establish boundaries of work time and take regular breaks
- Set up a workspace without distractions with a properly adjusted desk and chair. If you notice musculoskeletal problems (e.g. back or neck pain) or find you need any additional equipment at home, talk to your manager
- Get outside in the fresh air daily
- Exercise often. Visit the [NHS website](#) for exercises you can do at home.

Take time to relax

Relaxation can help to lower your blood pressure, slow your heart rate, improve digestion, reduce stress hormones, chronic pain and muscle tension.

It can also improve mental health by calming the mind, improving sleep, balancing emotions, increasing concentration and improve anxiety.

Two simple methods are:

1. Progressive muscle relaxation can reduce overall body tension as well as psychological stress. It involves tensing one muscle group at a time as you breathe in and relaxing each one as you breathe out. Find out more about on the [Very Well Mind website](#).
2. Box breathing helps return breathing to its normal rhythm, especially in times of stress. It involves breathing in for a count of four, holding for four, breathing out for four and holding for four before beginning the cycle again. Find out more about this technique [Very Well Mind website](#) .

A range of apps and podcasts with guided exercises are also available including:

- The [Headspace](#) app specialises in meditation. You can access up to 10 basic meditation sessions, three everyday sessions and a sleep session as part of a free trial. For access to the full range of sessions, there is a monthly subscription charge of £9.99
- The [Insight timer](#) app is for people interested in meditation, improving sleep, stress reduction and anxiety. There are over 30,000 free guided sessions which you can access by signing up without a subscription
- The [Calm](#) app offers access to a range of support including meditation sessions, sleep sessions, calming music, video sessions on mindful

movement and nature scenes/sounds. You can sign up for a seven-day free trial

- Dr Rangan Chatterjee's [Feel Better Live More](#) podcast features stories from guest experts in the field of health and wellness. Topics include depression, running, diet and many more.