

Your wellbeing and mental health

At a time when many of you will be thinking about the health and wellbeing of others, it is important to take good care of yourself too. We have heard lots of brilliant stories about how teams are connecting and support each other – even when there is a huge amount of pressure.

Here are six top tips for looking after yourself and others:

1. Consider tuning off automatic notifications and updates on coronavirus/COVID-19. Instead, do less frequent checks of reliable, impartial sources of information updates.
2. Look out for others who are going through a tough time. Acknowledge their feelings and remind each other to look after physical and mental health. Check in with each other during your working day or at the end of a shift to talk, share any worries and support each other.
3. Structure and routine can help keep your focus and mood up, so try to establish a sense of normality through unusual and uncertain times. Especially if you are more time than usual at home, stick to a regular routine of alarm, shower, meals, exercise etc. Focus on activities you **can** do, whether in your home life (cut the lawn, read a book) or in your work.
4. Use phone calls or video call apps like Facetime or Zoom to keep in touch with friends and family. Check in on elderly neighbours, or ask grandparents to read your children a bedtime story on Facetime.
5. At times of stress and anxiety, shallow breathing is common. Try a [breathing exercise](#) or use apps like [Calm](#), [Happy not Perfect](#), or [Insight Timer](#) to help relax.
6. Keep healthy and active, eat a balanced diet and avoid things like smoking and drinking. Fresh air is good for your wellbeing – tricky during lockdown, but even just sitting on your doorstep or in the garden could help. Go for a short run or do indoor exercise like online yoga or fitness classes.

If you find that anxiety is starting to affect your day-to-day, please speak with your manager or a trusted colleague to get more support. For support with your wider wellbeing and mental health, you can also call our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for free, confidential, 24/7 support on 0800 988 8809.

Other useful resources:

- **Mind:** [Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#)
- **Mental Health foundation:** [Looking after yourself during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- **Samaritans:** [call freephone 116 123.](#)
- And for those with small children in your lives, [Nurse Dotty Books: Dave the Dog is worried about coronavirus](#) - a book for children about coronavirus that aims to give information without fear.

Stay strong, stay well and look out for yourselves and one another. This will pass and we'll get through it together.