

## Self-Care Tips at Home in Stressful Times

The Fountain of Health ([www.fountainofhealth.ca](http://www.fountainofhealth.ca)) promotes brain health and well-being through *Physical Activity, Social Connection, Brain Challenge, Taking Care of Mental Health* and *Positive Thinking*. These Fountain of Health pillars help you to take care of yourself in stressful times while staying at home.

Below are examples of self-care activities to promote well-being while at home. For best results, set a health goal that is realistic and specific—what you will do, at what time of day, and for how long? Check with your healthcare provider to ensure the activity is safe for you to do. Register to use **The Wellness App** at <https://wellnessapp.ca> on any device receive support and encouragement for your goal.



- Physical Activity:** Just moving and being active will benefit your health. Regular physical activity can help to improve your mood, sleep and memory, and lower stress.
- Move your body at home by doing your daily chores.
  - Try yoga or other online programs that are safe for you (YouTube, TV, or DVDs).
  - Do something you enjoy - garden, or dance to music.
  - Take a walk around your neighbourhood, while keeping social distance.



- Social Connection:** Having trusted relationships with a friend, partner, or family members is protective for mental and physical health.
- Stay connected – Although you may be physically distant from friends and family, call to connect with others regularly.
  - If you have access to meet online, meet for a chat, a cup of tea or meal, or share an interest or activity.



- Brain Challenge:** Learning new things throughout life can improve brain health and well-being.
- Learn something new – Use time at home to learn a new skill like how to use a computer, or try out a new craft.
  - Reach out to your local library – Many libraries have online services where you can check out electronic books and audiobooks.
  - Explore your thoughts in writing – Write a short story, a poem or in a journal.



- Positive Thinking:** Your thoughts play an important role in overall health and even how you cope with or bounce back in times of stress.
- To lower your stress, focus only on what is in your control. Try not to dwell on things outside of your control.
  - Focus on what you feel grateful for. Take a minute to write down 1-3 things you are grateful for, keep a gratitude journal, or use an online gratitude resource.
  - Notice what you are doing well to keep healthy and give yourself credit – Your efforts to physically distance and stay at home deserve to be appreciated.



- Take Care of Your Mental Health:** Good mental health helps us cope with life's challenges and improves our lives. Having strategies to lower stress and challenge negative thoughts can help. Being willing to ask for help when needed is key.
- Take time each day to look after yourself in basic ways: Have a routine, get enough rest, eat healthy meals, and limit alcohol intake.
  - Stay informed from reliable news sources only. Consider limiting your intake of daily news to 30 minutes, especially at times when the news is distressing.
  - Seek out professional help if you are struggling to cope.

The Wellness App: [wellnessapp.ca](http://wellnessapp.ca) Email: [info@fountainofhealth.ca](mailto:info@fountainofhealth.ca)  
Clinicians are welcome to photocopy forms but may not modify them without permission.



## Self-Care Online Resources

Please visit [Fountain of Health](#) for a range of online resources, tools and links including [The Wellness App](#). Other free online resources for each of the Fountain of Health domains are below. Check for local online programs in your area. See Public Health Agency of Canada resources: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/resources-older-adults-caregivers.html#a3>



### Physical Activity

Many physical activity centres are taking their programs online. In addition try:

- Walking at home: <https://www.youtube.com/user/walkathomedia>
- ParticipACTION: <https://www.participaction.com/en-ca>
- YMCA Canada: <https://ymca.ca/>
- Yoga with Adrienne: <https://yogawithadriene.com/free-yoga-videos/>
- Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto at home activity: <https://bit.ly/2yQmZt2>



### Social Connection

Many community agencies are offering help to those unable to leave their homes. Check out what is available in your area, whether you need support or can volunteer.

- Connect to community resources and services: Dial or text [2-1-1](#) or visit [211.ca](#)
- Conversations with youth: <https://www.chattingtowellness.ca/>
- Online social activity examples: [The Big Sing](#); [virtual book clubs](#)
- Volunteer Canada: <https://volunteer.ca/>



### Brain Challenge

Learn something new and stimulating your brain in unique ways.

- Virtual classes: [https://www.skillshare.com/classes/free:](https://www.skillshare.com/classes/free;)  
<https://www.coursera.org/>
- Painting: [Bob Ross - The Joy of Painting](#)
- University/professional education: <https://www.edx.org/>



### Positive Thinking

Notice what is good in ourselves and around us and focus on what we can change when problems arise. Changing thinking habits is not easy but it is possible.

- Finding happiness resource: [bit.ly/2WCc6mg](https://bit.ly/2WCc6mg)
- Meditation/sleep/exercise tools: <https://www.headspace.com/covid-19>
- Get positive messages by email: <https://www.happify.com/public/happify-daily/>
- Positive thinking tools: [Positive thinking: Stop negative self-talk to reduce stress](#)
- Self-compassion tools: <https://self-compassion.org>



### Mental Health

Visit trusted mental health services websites, including the Mental Health Commission of Canada's [Resource Hub](#) or your local health authority/ mental health services.

- Mindfulness online community: <https://openheartproject.com/>
- Sleeping resource: <https://mysleepwell.ca/>
- Healthy eating guide: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>
- Mental Health and Substance Use support: [Wellness Together Canada](#)
- Anxiety support: [Strongest Families Institute](#) offer an anxiety program [ICAN](#)
- Stress reduction tips during COVID-19: <http://waterloocbt.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Tips-for-Coping-During-COVID-19.pdf>; [Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide](#)
- Mental health support lines: <https://bit.ly/2TbgbwZ>