

Ways to Take Care of Yourself During the Coronavirus Outbreak

We are living in unprecedented times as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Each day we are bombarded with news stories and everchanging information which has effects on our mental health.

It is normal to feel overwhelmed and anxious during this time of uncertainty. It's important to take care of our mental health as much as our physical health. Here are a few tips for taking care of yourself over the coming weeks.

Stay Active

Exercise is great for your physical and mental health. It promotes the release of 'feel good' chemicals in the brain, helps you sleep better, manage stress and boosts energy. As we know, exercise is an important part of managing cystic fibrosis (CF) and staying healthy. There are lots of different types of exercise you can do from home. Here are a few links to try out:

- [BEAM](#) – Beam is an online exercise platform with a huge catalogue of CF-oriented exercise videos. They offer on-demand, live classes and group classes, all from the comfort of your own home. They are offering people with CF a free 3-month trial. Contact CFWA via email (physio@cfwa.org.au) for the code.
- [Yoga with Adriene](#) – Hundreds of free yoga workouts for all levels to follow.



- Virtual Boot Camp – CFWA is creating an 8-week virtual boot camp challenge. Please join the new 'CFWA Fundraising Community' Facebook group to stay in the loop.

Mindfulness

When we become stressed and overwhelmed, our heart rate increases, and our thoughts can speed up. Taking time out to breathe, meditate or practice mindfulness can reduce anxiety levels. There are several free apps available for guided mediation. Some examples are:

- [Smiling Mind](#) – Smiling Mind have released 'Thrive Inside', a special COVID -19 initiative to help people stay calm and healthy in isolation.
- [Insight Timer](#) – Free guided meditations to help calm the mind, reduce anxiety and manage stress.

Physical Distancing not Social Distancing

We are all aware of the importance of physical distancing in order to stop the spread of Coronavirus; however now more than ever, it is important to keep socially connected with friends and family. Phone calls, text, WhatsApp, Facetime, Messenger, Social Media – check in with people, especially those who are on their own. We are all in this together.

Explaining these changes to children can be difficult. “[Time to Come in, Bear](#)” is a one-minute video produced by children’s author Kim St Lawrence, explaining why we need to stay home.

You can connect with other members of the CF community in Western Australia by becoming a member of our Facebook support groups, CF Talk Adults and CF Talk Parents. Just search for them in Facebook.

Maintain a Routine

We are all learning to adapt to our new ‘normal’. Our world has changed in a very short period of time. Do not underestimate the value of keeping structure in your day. Eat regular healthy meals, take medication, prioritise sleep routines and maintain physical activity. For those working from home, try to maintain a healthy balance by allocating specific work hours, taking regular breaks and, if possible, establish a dedicated workspace.

Take a Break

Take a break from watching, reading or listening to news stories about Coronavirus. Try to limit your media intake to a couple of times a day, especially if you are finding it distressing. Take time out to engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing, such as reading, baking, listening to music.

More support

If it’s all getting too much please contact one of our Social Workers at CFWA phone **08 6457 7333** or email Kathryn Pekin (servicesmanager@cfwa.org.au) or our Youth Social Worker Haylee Riddell (socialworker@cfwa.org.au).

If you’re struggling with your mental health, you can go to your GP to access a Mental Health Care Plan and Medicare Rebate. Telehealth sessions to see a clinical psychologist are now bulk billed (*no cost to you). CFWA offers a mental health gap subsidy of up to \$50 a session for those still seeing their health care provider in person.

Mental Health Links

- [Lifeline](#) 13 11 14
- [Eheadsace](#) - free online support and counselling to young people 12–25 years old.
- [Beyond Blue](#)

Useful Resources

- [COVID-19 Member Support](#) (CFWA)
- [What is Corona Virus: A Kids Guide](#) (Government of WA, Child and Adolescent Health Service)
- [Mental Health Care Plan Factsheet](#) (CFWA)
- [Mental Health Gap Subsidy](#) (CFWA)

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