



# TIPS for Managing Stressful Times related to COVID 19: *Healthcare Workers*

## Topic 6: Taking Care of Yourself and Your Loved Ones

Self-care is hard. We all struggle with it, especially in trying times. It may seem that in light of this national emergency, self-care is “out the window,” when in fact, the opposite can be true. Take advantage of time with loved ones at home to focus on your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around you.

**Move:** Physical activity is an important part of self-care for many, but gyms are closed and social distancing is being strictly enforced in many communities, so what can you do? Get out in nature. Research has shown green exercise benefits physical, mental and emotional health. Take advantage of the weather warming up and the days getting longer by getting outdoors. Enhance your benefits by taking a family member along or making a call to catch up with a loved one. [Learn more about enhancing your wellbeing in nature.](#)

**Eat:** How we fuel our body is another important part of self-care. During this time of social distancing and restaurant closures, consider making a healthy meal an important part of your day. Many healthy plant-based meals can be made right from ingredients in your pantry like these [Moroccan Chickpeas with Tomato](#) or find other ideas on our [website](#). Enhance your benefits by enjoying the meal over video conference with an elderly family member or leave a container on the doorstep of an elderly neighbor. [Learn more about what experts recommend for healthy eating on our website.](#)

**Sleep:** Getting enough rest is an important part of immune system function and stress management- two areas we should all be focusing on right now. Sleep and stress have a reciprocal relationship for most individuals. If these stressful times are affecting your ability to get a good night’s sleep, visit our [website](#) for five tips for better rest.

*One way to start impacting your sleep is to establish a bedtime and wake up routine. This is especially important for frontline staff who often have rotating schedules and disrupted sleep schedules. Cueing in our bodies and minds helps us prepare to and from sleeping. Routines could be as basic as: Bedtime: turn down lights, wash face, brush teeth, read five pages from a book. Waking: gratitude practice while in bed, make coffee, 5 minute stretch.*



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**Manage your Stress:** Managing our stress is an ongoing challenge. You may find yourself consumed with new stressors during this challenging time. Conversely, you may find yourself with fewer commitments as activities and outings are cancelled. Whatever your stress level, it is important to continue to develop skills for mastering stress. Set an example for your family and co-workers by applying some of the tips on our [website](#).

*Learn more at [csh.umn.edu](https://csh.umn.edu)*