

# Coping With COVID-19

By Eric Endlich, PhD

## Facing a pandemic such as COVID-19 can be stressful and scary.

There are continuous news reports of outbreaks and other developments. How can you remain calm?

### Manage your media exposure.

Staying current on important changes (e.g., travel bans) is appropriate, but it's not necessary to check news outlets multiple times a day.

### Stay connected with friends and loved ones.

Try to discuss various topics, not just the current crisis. Schedule regular video chats or phone calls.

**Maintain routines when possible.** If your old routines (e.g., leaving for work) aren't possible, establish new ones such as daily walks or exercise.

### Seek out meaningful, productive activities.

Make something creative, clean out an overstuffed closet or take an interesting course online.

**Many of these strategies apply to helping children cope, too.** Additional steps to support them include:

- **Correcting any misinformation.** Encourage precautionary measures, but provide appropriate positive information as well. They should know, for example, that even if family members get sick, most likely they will recover.

“One of the things I learned the hard way was that it doesn't pay to get discouraged. Keeping busy and making optimism a way of life can restore your faith in yourself.”

— Lucille Ball



- **Allowing them to express their feelings.** Show that you understand what they feel by mirroring their communication (“sounds like you're pretty worried”) without disputing it. Let them know that being frightened is perfectly normal.
- **Providing verbal and physical comfort.** Reassure them, but avoid false promises.
- **Instructing them on ways to stay healthy.** These steps include good hygiene (especially handwashing), nutrition, rest and exercise.
- **Remaining patient.** They look to you as an example for how to cope. Know that the situation, while challenging for everyone, is temporary.



## BEST bits

■ **When adding to your activity level, increase it no more than 10% per week.** For instance, if you usually walk two miles daily and want to boost your fitness level, don't try to double it in a week's time. Gradually add more distance. Tack on another 0.2 miles. Slowly build up to more miles each week until you reach your new goal. The same 10% rule goes for strength training.



■ **A major safety problem at home is children exposed to poisonous products, according to the National Safety Council.** During National Safety Month this June, take an inventory: Keep all chemicals, household cleaners, medicines and potentially poisonous substances in locked cabinets or out of kids' reach. And add safety latches on drawers or cabinets, and child-resistant caps on bottles. Record the National Poison Control Center number in your phone: **800-222-1222**, available 24 hours a day/7 days a week for questions or emergencies.



■ **During Internet Safety Month review your online habits to steer clear of viruses and spyware.** Update your security software, browsers, apps and operating systems. Help your kids safely navigate their digital world and educate them to avoid harmful online experiences; explore websites, games, apps and social media together and set some rules. Learn more at the National Cyber Security Alliance: **staysafeonline.org**.

■ **Note:** Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit **coronavirus.gov**.



# Mobility and Exercise

Explore your movable options.

## Most of us can exercise without full physical mobility.

Arthritis, chronic illness, severe weight problem or other ongoing physical or mental disability? Some level of regular exercise is possible when it's personally suited to you.

Regardless of your age or condition, staying active can help you feel stronger throughout the day. With the guidance of your health care provider, here are three key fitness pursuits to consider.

**1. Cardio strength:** If you're overweight or have arthritic knees, you can still exercise your heart and burn calories with soft workouts. Routine walking may be the best low-impact cardio workout if you keep a brisk pace; be sure to wear good supportive shoes. Or try elliptical and bike exercise. For upper body strengthening, consider body bands.

**2. Muscle health:** Do you use a wheelchair? Focus on upper body strengthening with free-weight workouts; wheel yourself about outside daily. For chronic back pain or a shoulder injury, work your leg and core muscles.



**3. Stretching:** Even with limited movement in your legs or back, you should enjoy better flexibility and comfort through daily stretching. And it may help prevent or delay further muscle atrophy.

**Regular exercise can also have a powerful effect on your mental health,** especially when coping with long-term physical challenges. During exercise, your body releases endorphins that energize mood and stamina, ease stress, boost your self-confidence and improve your outlook on life.

**Maybe you can't move as well as you want to,** but you have the same need to protect your health and future as people without disabilities.

## Top Reasons for Health Care Visits



**Primary health care providers are usually the first health care professional you see when you have health concerns.** This person can be a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner, whose job is four-fold. They:

### 1. Identify and resolve sudden medical problems.

Common examples are influenza, pneumonia, stomach or intestinal virus, bladder infection, broken bones and other injuries. Providers also may prescribe medications and behavioral change.

**2. Treat you for chronic conditions.** For example, your provider can help you cope with ongoing back pain, insomnia or depression, and guide you with disease management. The most common chronic conditions primary providers help us control include hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, elevated cholesterol, asthma, IBS and obesity.

**3. Refer you to a specialist.** When a condition warrants it, your provider will help coordinate additional care. For example, following a heart attack, you could regularly see a cardiologist. Once you are stabilized on the proper medications, the cardiologist would likely refer you back to your primary care provider for continued monitoring and treatment.

**4. Guide you with self-care measures to help you avoid or control disease.** Your provider will do vaccinations and perform annual physical exams that can include bloodwork and screenings for various diseases and conditions. Providers teach patients how to minimize lifestyle risks that could lead to future diseases. For example, if you have high blood pressure or risks for it, your provider may advise you to manage or avoid it through dietary changes, regular exercise and quitting smoking, in addition to medication.

## QuikQuiz™: Are You Financially Literate?

By Jamie Lynn Byram, MBA, AFC, MS

### Test your money smarts:

- You have \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate is 2% per year. After five years how much will you have in the account if you don't spend any?
  - More than \$102.
  - Exactly \$102.
  - Less than \$102.
  - None of the above.
- Your savings account's interest rate is 1% per year and inflation is 2% per year. After 1 year, how much could you buy with the money?
  - More than today.
  - Exactly the same.
  - Less than today.
- If interest rates rise, what will typically happen to bond prices?
  - They will rise.
  - They will fall.
  - They will stay the same.
  - There is no relationship between bond prices and the interest rate.
- A 15-year mortgage typically requires higher monthly payments than a 30-year mortgage, but the total interest paid over the life of the loan will be less.  
 True  False
- Buying a single company's stock usually provides a safer return than a stock mutual fund.  
 True  False



### ANSWERS:

1. a; 2. c; 3. b; 4. True; 5. False

## June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month.



Did you know? Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of American deaths. But it's not part of normal aging, according to the NIH. Instead of feeling helpless about Alzheimer's and related forms of dementia, use Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness month as an opportunity to discover ways to potentially lower the risk and how to bring attention and funding to Alzheimer's research. Learn more at [act.alz.org](http://act.alz.org).

### TIP of the MONTH

## Eat the Rainbow

You may wonder if there's one fruit or vegetable that you should eat more often than the others, but there's no one standout option.

Instead, the best advice is to eat a rainbow of different colors of vegetables and fruit because they contain more than 25,000 different phytochemicals, which help prevent disease and keep your body functioning optimally. Examples of beneficial phytochemicals are anthocyanins in blueberries, beta-carotene in carrots, and lycopene in tomatoes.



# Produce 3 Ways

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



**There's always nutrition research that's up for debate — is saturated fat harmful or helpful?** Is a low-fat or low-carb diet better? But the one thing all health professionals agree on is the importance of eating enough vegetables and fruit.

**Filled with fiber, vitamins, minerals and important antioxidants, vegetables and fruit are known to help reduce the risk of developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer.** Your best bet is to fill half your plate with colorful options at all of your meals, and anything goes. It does not matter if the vegetables are fresh, frozen or canned — what's most important is that you eat them daily.



**Go fresh:** If you live in an area where fresh vegetables and fruits are economical and readily available all year round, stock up on your favorites and enjoy. Some hardy and affordable options are carrots, beets, squash, celery, pears, apples and broccoli. Buy berries in season and freeze them for later use.

**Rely on frozen:** Studies that test the vitamin content of fresh vs. frozen vegetables show that both are quite nutritious, with frozen options often edging out the fresh options. Why? Because frozen vegetables are picked and packed at the height of their nutrient value, and freezing locks in the vitamins. However, the vitamins in fresh vegetables may degrade while they are shipped and stored. Both are still nutritious options — so choose what you prefer.



**Stock cans:** Canned vegetables and fruit are economical and convenient, and they have a long shelf life. If possible, choose those with no added salt or sugar. Rinse those that have added salt or sugar.

**Remember that canned and frozen vegetables** are convenient and help reduce food waste because they last longer than fresh vegetables. They are all great choices.

## Summer Corn Salad

EASY recipe

3 cups fresh, frozen (defrosted) or canned (and drained) corn niblets	¼ cup chopped fresh parsley or basil
1 cup chopped cucumber	3 tbsp olive oil
1 cup diced tomato	2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
¼ cup diced red onion	1 tsp Dijon mustard
	¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

**In a large bowl, add corn, cucumber, tomato, onion and parsley. In a small container with a lid, add oil, vinegar and mustard. Shake well, then add dressing to vegetables, and toss to coat. Top with feta cheese and serve.**



**Makes 6 servings. Per serving:**

170 calories | 4g protein | 9g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 6g mono fat | 1g poly fat | 22g carbohydrate | 4g sugar | 3g fiber | 98mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## EXPERT advice — Eric Endlich, PhD

**Q:** Relief for burnout?

**A:** Prolonged stress can lead to burnout, a state of physical and emotional exhaustion. When demands are too great, you may lose interest and motivation. It's important to address this condition before it leads to health problems. Keys to managing burnout include:

- **Identifying the signs early.** Know when you're reaching your limit.
- **Finding a good listener.** Whether via a loved one or support group, feeling heard can be very comforting.
- **Avoiding excessive negativity.** Read positive news stories and seek out upbeat people.
- **Engaging in meaningful activities.** What makes you feel fulfilled?
- **Considering your options.** Can you decline or delegate some tasks?
- **Relaxing.** Try yoga, a nature walk or soothing music.
- **Sleeping.** This is essential.
- **Exercising.**

When your energy is low, this can be challenging but also rejuvenating.



# The ABCs of DE (Device Ergonomics)

The average American spends about 3 hours and 43 minutes daily looking at mobile devices, according to an eMarketer study. With this, neck injuries are also growing, according to an Ergonomic Trends report, "U.S. Time Spent With Mobile 2019."

## SAFETY corner



To prevent these types of injuries, follow this advice:

1. **Take frequent breaks (every 20 minutes) from typing.** If you plan to use a tablet for longer durations, use a separate keyboard and prop up the tablet on a stand to avoid neck strain.
2. **Write fewer and shorter messages.** Use dictation when possible. Or use apps available for voice recognition, abbreviation expansion or word completion to reduce key input associated with texting.
3. **Use hands-free devices** to eliminate awkward and static postures when you have to be on the phone a long time (meetings or conference calls).
4. **Maintain neutral wrists** and alternate hands when holding mobile devices.
5. **Keep your head in a neutral position** and keep your elbows relaxed below your shoulders.
6. **Perform hand exercises** recommended by the Physical Therapy Association. Learn more at [www.uclahealth.org/safety/Workfiles/Ergo-Tips-Hand-Held-Devices.pdf](http://www.uclahealth.org/safety/Workfiles/Ergo-Tips-Hand-Held-Devices.pdf).
7. **Alternate using fingers and thumbs when typing** to reduce chance of repetitive injuries to the thumb.

## Prone to headaches?

Studies have shown people who get regular aerobic exercise report fewer headaches — migraine or tension. Exercise helps by reducing physical tension and anxiety and increasing pain-fighting brain chemicals, resulting in fewer and less severe headaches. With your health care provider's okay, target 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, each week.

