

Note: Students in Cal U's [Doctor of Health Science: Health Science and Exercise Leadership](#) program developed this resource for the course *DHS 805: Health Promotion and Wellness for the Individual*, taught by Dr. Jeff Hatton. This information is presented by students Jarryd Erb, Tyler Leshner, Sean Mageau, Andrew Mills, Courtney Russ and Thurston Sick.

Maximize Your Wellness During the Pandemic



COVID-19 has affected the lives of everyone in the world in different ways. The response by individuals and nations around the world is something to be marveled at. These measures put in place for all of our safety and well being have drastically altered our day to day lives. It is important to heed the warnings and recommendations from our officials for our own and community health.

One way we as individuals can further protect ourselves is to focus on our own wellness. There are countless mechanisms related to our wellness that help optimize our immune system to mitigate the risk of serious infection and diseases. The focus should not only be placed on our physical health but on all other domains as well. Below this a toolbox of resources for each domain of wellness to help during this pandemic.

I. Physical Wellness

Physical wellness is what most people think of when they hear the term “wellness”. It is not hard to see why we should be placing a high priority on our physical wellness in these times. Improving our physical wellness will not just help optimize our immune system, it will also have noticeable positive effects in other domains of wellness.

A. Exercise

A large portion of the country is placed in varying levels of quarantine; many of us are not moving and getting the same amount of exercise we have in the past. It is vital for us to establish a routine of moving, not only to help our bodies fight off the current threats but to increase our overall wellness. Below is a list of free resources to help keep us moving.

- Youtube is a phenomenal source for at-home exercise routines
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=bodyweight+workout&sp=EgIQAw%253D%253D&pbjreload=10
- Youtube is also a great resource to get the whole family or children involved
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5uIZ2KOZZeQDQo_Gsi_qbQ
- https://www.goldsgym.com/anywhere/?click_referral=home-vid
- <https://www.planetfitness.com/health>
- https://portal.dailyburn.com/?property=at_home
- <https://fys.moveu.com/courses/homehealth>
- <https://justdancenow.com/>
- Yoga
 - <https://www.corepoweryogaondemand.com/keep-up-your-practice>
 - <https://barre3.com/trial>

B. Nutrition

Around 70% of our immune system cells are located in our gut. The food we eat has a direct impact on how our bodies can respond to a threat.

- There are countless dietary strategies. This is not the place to advocate for one of them. However, there is one overarching rule that can be applied to every diet and lifestyle that will help improve your health: cut back on processed foods. <https://world.openfoodfacts.org/nova>
- The difference between hunger and boredom.
<https://blog.myfitnesspal.com/how-to-beat-boredom-eating/>
- There are nutritional supplements that have been proven to increase immune function.
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2020/04/01/ask-the-expert-the-role-of-diet-and-nutritional-supplements-during-covid-19/>

B. Sleep

Sleep is an area that is often undervalued. Take the time to prioritize your sleep and see for yourself the drastic improvement it can have on your wellness.

- <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/healthy-sleep-tips>
- <https://www.headspace.com/sleep/how-to-sleep-better>
- https://www.ted.com/talks/matt_walker_why_sleep_matters_now_more_than_ever

C. Go outside

If it possible in the area you live, take some time to go outside to experience a multitude of health benefits.

- <https://medium.com/@ra.hobday/coronavirus-and-the-sun-a-lesson-from-the-1918-influenza-pandemic-509151dc8065>

D. Immune system

- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/how-to-boost-your-immune-system>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/10/well/live/can-i-boost-my-immune-system.html>

II. Intellectual Wellness

It is important for our overall wellness to keep challenging our minds and keep growing.

A. Reading, free resources

- https://www.amazon.com/kindle-dbs/promoLanding?linkCode=w61&imprToken=SD1PvcoQA13nCLJQjeqTdw&slotNum=0&campaignId=907ea992-8e47-45f1-bacf-eeee592e4423&promoCode=907ea992-8e47-45f1-bacf-eeee592e4423&tag=nypost-20&tag=nypost-20&mod=article_inline
- <https://blog.scribd.com/home/2020/3/17/a-letter-from-the-scribd-ceo-to-our-community>
- <https://publishers.org/aap-news/covid-19-response/>

B. Audiobooks, free resources

- <https://www.audible.com/ep/FreeListens>
- https://librivox.org/search?primary_key=0&search_category=author&search_page=1&search_form=get_results
- <http://www.openculture.com/freeaudiobooks>

C. Learning a new skill

- Free online classes <https://www.classcentral.com/>

D. TED Talks - now including TED Connects - is a great place to learn something new or get inspired

- <https://www.ted.com/talks>

III. Emotional Wellness

It is to be expected to experience some changes in our emotional wellness in this strange time, having financial concerns, and worrying about the health of ourselves and others. Many of the steps we can take to improve our emotional state are listed in the physical wellness section such as sleep, exercise, and eating healthy foods. There are also meditations and outlooks we can utilize to improve our current state.

A. Meditation

- Headspace and Calm are apps offering free sessions in response to COVID-19.
 - Headspace <https://www.headspace.com/covid-19>
 - Calm <https://blog.calm.com/take-a-deep-breath>

B. Managing stress and depression

- **Coursera Free Mental and Emotional Health Course Coursera** – Free Mental and Emotional Health Course specifically for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - https://www.coursera.org/learn/manage-health-covid-19?utm_medium=email&utm_source=marketing&utm_campaign=tB4QUHR7Eeqd_xFKDENJkw
- **Depression**
 - <https://www.foundmyfitness.com/topics/depression>
- **Stress**
 - A great free downloadable resource that offers multiple strategies to relieve stress is this *Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*
 - <https://timetothrivetherapy.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Relaxation-and-Stress-Workbook.pdf>
 - <https://news.usc.edu/167512/covid-19-stress-coping-healthy-habits-usc-social-science-experts/>
- **Coloring Pages (to print) or a Coloring App**
 - <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pixel.art.coloring.color.number&hl=en>
 - <https://www.justcolor.net/>
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_gilbert_it_s_ok_to_feel_overwhelmed_here_s_what_to_do_next

C. Virtual counseling

Here are some organizations that offer virtual counseling:

- Amwell: <https://business.amwell.com/>
- Better help: <https://www.betterhelp.com/>
- RNG International: <https://rnginternational.com/>

IV. Spiritual Wellness

A. Values

- What do you feel strongly about?

B. Meaning

- What gives you hope?

C. Purpose

- What inspires you?

D. Ramp up your positive outlook.

- Moskowitz and colleagues developed an intervention program listed below to improve someone's spiritual wellness even in the midst of a very challenging circumstance: Make note of a positive event each day. Appreciate that event and record it in a journal or tell others about it. Start a daily gratitude journal. Make note of a personal strength how you used it. Set an attainable goal and note your progress. Report a relatively minor stress and compile ways to reevaluate the event in a positive manner. Recognize and practice small acts of kindness daily. Practice mindfulness, focusing on here and now rather than the past or future. (Hrabe et al., 2018)

E. A form of meditative practice can improve spiritual wellness.

- Meditation, yoga, tai chi, gardening, walking.

F. Reconnect with your purpose and passion in life.

- Set aside some “alone time” for you to carefully consider your purpose and passion in life, and whether/how you're living it out. Are there adjustments you need to make? What do you need to stop doing? What do you need to start doing? In the next five to ten years what would you do if you knew that you couldn't fail? Occasionally "taking stock" is vital to staying on track.

G. Philosophize - This is a great resource to explore different philosophies and ways of thinking to help find your place in the world and understand others.

- <http://philosophizethis.org/>

V. Occupational Wellness

A. Many states are offering COVID-19 specific unemployment options for those laid-off or temporarily on furlough due to quarantine measures.

B. If you are a business owner, the SBA is currently offering multiple loan options with some amounts qualifying for forgiveness for specific expenses such as utilities, rent, and payroll.

- <https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>

VI. Environmental Wellness

A. It is important for everyone to utilize universal precautions to reduce the spread of infection. The World Health Organization has provided a resource on the expanded use of universal precautions:

- https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/documents/health-topics/standard-precautions-in-health-care.pdf?sfvrsn=7c453df0_2

B. A comprehensive list of changes to state-level hunting and fishing regulations due to COVID-19

- <https://www.themeateater.com/pages/covid19-updates>

C. As pollution levels are decreasing, take time to reevaluate your impact on the earth and appreciate natural beauty each day. Go for a walk. Smell the fresh, spring flowers. Ground yourself by walking barefoot in the grass. Reconnect with nature.

VII. Financial Wellness

A. Creating a budget

B. Prioritizing bills (which can you defer, get a payment plan/forbearance, and which must you pay now while having enough money for food and necessities)

- <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/toughtimes/covid-19-financial-resources/>
- <https://home.treasury.gov/cares>

VIII. Social Wellness

A. The Red Cross is in need of individuals who are fully recovered from COVID-19 and may be able to donate plasma to help current patients.

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html>

- B.** It is important to differentiate social distancing from physical distancing. Currently the term social distancing is being used to encourage quarantine measures. While maintaining a physical distance from each other is important for the time being, we should continue to socialize through other means such as social media platforms and telephone (Smith et al., 2020).
- C.** <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/hangouts/id643496868> Google Hangouts
- D.** <https://zoom.us/>
- E.** <https://houseparty.com/>
- F.** <https://www.skype.com/en/>

It's important to remember that your feelings are valid, and there are many healthy ways to cope with our new, temporary reality. While it may be overwhelming to see lists of recommendations and so many resources to choose from, they are here as options. It is also ok to unplug, disconnect, and do nothing. Listen to your body and take care of yourself. We are all doing the best we can, one day at a time.

References

- Hrabe, D., Melnyk, B. M., & Neale, S. (2018). Spiritual wellness: A journey toward wholeness. *American Nurse Today*, 13(10), 24–26. <https://www.myamericannurse.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ant10-Wellness-Spiritual-919.pdf>
- Smith, K. J., Gavey, S., Riddell, N. E., Kontari, P., & Victor, C. (2020). The association between loneliness, social isolation and inflammation: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 112, 519-541.