# COVID-19: Self-Care

COVID-19 (coronavirus) has brought about uncertainty for many, with constant messages being shared about restrictions, reducing the spread of the virus, and staying at home. Although things have changed somewhat since 2020, it’s still easy to be overwhelmed by the situation and neglect your mental and physical wellbeing. We have developed a COVID-19 Self-care Plan to assist with reducing the stress may arise from navigating life with COVID-19.

\*Please note the following advice is of a general nature and is not meant to replace individual counselling, therapy and/or medical or mental health advice.

**Engaging in Self-Care**

Self-care means looking after your own physical, mental, and emotional health. Self-care can take many shapes and forms. It doesn’t need to take up a lot of time or cost a lot of money.

Here are some tips adapted from the SANE Australia website for engaging in your own self-care.

* Take a break when you need it. If you are feeling overwhelmed, taking some time for yourself can help you feel refreshed.
* Stay in touch with family and friends who encourage and support you.
* Establish a connection with an activity you enjoy— reading, cooking, listening to music, walking, or sitting in the outdoors are simple ways to start.
* Think about ways to look after your physical health, prioritise sleep and aim to make healthy food choices.
* Build exercise that best works for you into your daily routine— it is great for your health and stress relief.
* Talking about your feelings to a trusted friend can help you feel supported.
* Try to identify your stress indicators, such as short temper, withdrawal from friends and family, feeling overwhelmed or drained.
* Know that it is okay to be gentle with yourself and to take things slowly. Take time to consider how you might spend some time today that will help you to feel calmer or happier.
* Seek help for yourself if you need to talk. You can start with a Helpline service or speak with your GP.

**Your General Practitioner (GP)**

Your GP can provide support and provide a gateway for referral. They can prepare a Mental Health Treatment Plan for you which can help you and your GP to work out what services you need and decide on the best management options. Talking with your GP can help you understand what you are eligible for can help you access relevant services.

**COVID-19: Self-Care Plan**

A self-care plan involves undertaking activities to support your holistic well-being, including:

* Physical health
* Emotional health
* Psychological health

Prioritising your mental, physical, and psychological health may be low on your priority list; however, practicing self-care will increase both your resilience and capacity to manage stress. Organising and planning self-care will help you maintain self-care when you need it the most.

Complete the COVID-19 Self-Care Plan and consider what actions may help to support your well-being and how you can achieve your self-care goals.

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| Physical activities | Emotional activities | Psychological activities |
| e.g., Develop a regular sleep routine. | e.g., Write down three good things that you did each day. | e.g., Organise time to engage with friends and family each day. |
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**Assessing your self-care strategies**

Remember to ‘Check-in’ with yourself while completing your self-care plan. Identifying how you are feeling emotionally and physically can help structure your self-care plan moving forward. The following questions will help structure your self-care activities.

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| Are there any challenges to completing these activities? |
| How might I overcome these challenges? |
| What can I do to stay motivated with my self-care? |
| By creating this plan, what do I hope to feel? |

People with pre-existing mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. If you need to talk to someone, reach out to a support service such as Lifeline on 13 11 14, who provide 24-hour support to listen to how you are feeling and offer you information and advice.

For more information about caring for your health and wellbeing, visit Lung Foundation Australia’s Mind Matters via [lungfoundation.com.au/MindMatters](https://lungfoundation.com.au/patients-carers/after-your-diagnosis-title/mental-health/).

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