

Stay At Home: Keeping Mentally Healthy

It can be stressful being under a “stay at home” order. Here are some activities that may help keep you mentally well.

- Wake up every day at the same time with an alarm.
- Eat a well-balanced and healthy diet – including drinking plenty of water.
- Exercise as you are able. For example, you can walk around your apartment to stay active.
- Stop drinking caffeinated beverages or eating sugary sweet foods after 1:00 p.m.
- If you need to take a nap, limit it to **only** 20 minutes. Longer naps will make you feel more tired.
- Take a break from the news for 30 minutes or more every day.
- Be present to your “here and now.”
 - Color or do something creative.
 - Open the windows and deep breathe.
 - Listen to music or the outside sounds.
 - Touch different fabrics inside your home, or rocks outside your house. Play with fidgets that make you feel soothed.
 - Pray, meditate, or practice deep breathing.
- Know what your early and warning signs are for symptoms. Write down what works to help at each stage. If you are not sure, talk to your care manager or mental health provider(s) for help.

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- Keep electronic devices outside of your bedroom when you sleep at night.
- Talk on the phone with a supportive person daily. If you have access, video-chat or email family and friends.
- Keep a diary of your thoughts and how you feel about them. This can be written down or recorded on your phone.
- If you are feeling urges to use substances or drink alcohol, see if you can figure out what is causing these thoughts. Think about what helped you with these thoughts in the past. Try to find a positive support person that you could call or a healthy activity that you can do at home.
- Turn off all technology (phones, TVs, computers, etc.) at least 30 minutes before bed.
- Dim the lights 30 minutes before going to bed.
- Use your bed only for sleeping (i.e., don't watch TV or read in bed).
- If you cannot fall asleep in 20 minutes, get out of bed, listen to music or try a deep breathing exercise. (For example, sit in a comfortable position, and pay attention to your breath as you breathe in and out.)
- Think about other resources you can use within your home.

If your feelings become too big or worrisome, please contact one of the numbers below:

EMERGENCY

(You cannot keep yourself safe)

9-1-1

SAMHSA HELPLINE

1-800-662-4357

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-8255

ILLINOIS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

1-877-863-6338;
1-877-863-6339
(TTY)

Please note, this is not a comprehensive list intended as medical advice, but is an educational tool compiled by UIC College of Nursing staff.