



Taking care of your mind

Taking care of your mind during the COVID-19 pandemic

Please click on underlined articles, to take you to the link to read them

There are many things we can do to look after our mental health and wellbeing during these uncertain times. Every Mind Matters has put together the [top 10 tips to help if you are worried about the coronavirus outbreak](#). These include tips and tools for keeping in touch with friends and family, being active at home and getting information from sources you can trust. The [Good Thinking website](#) also offers a range of practical advice and self-help tools.

If you already have mental health problems and are worried about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on your wellbeing, Mind Wise has [published some information and advice about this](#).

The following sections provide more advice and support:

Sleep and managing anxiety

When we're anxious it can be hard to sleep. The NHS [Good Thinking website provides information and support on sleep](#), including apps and online help.

Tomo is a new free app available on Good Thinking, designed to support you with keeping on top of your daily tasks, anxiety and poor sleep. The app combines digital peer support with the best of social media and proven therapeutic techniques. You can find more information on the [Good Thinking website](#).

[Mindfulness](#) is a great way to help calm your mind and help you get to sleep.

The NHS has a [mindfulness meditation to help you to sleep](#).

Worried about sexual or domestic abuse

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been more difficult for survivors of domestic abuse to seek support, especially if they live with their abusers. [Get support for domestic abuse](#).

Caring for someone

When you are caring for someone, it's important to know what help is available as the situation changes.

The [Carers UK](#) website has some helpful advice and information about the support available to you, and those you look after, during the coronavirus pandemic.

If you live with or take care of somebody with dementia, you can find further [information and advice on the Alzheimer's Society website](#).

If you have received an NHS letter, or are caring for someone who has, you can [register for further support](#). We are working with the local NHS and GP surgeries, charities and community and volunteer groups to reach more people and make sure that [everyone in the community has one-stop access to the right support during COVID-19](#).

Feeling lonely and isolated

As coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads and we all need to spend more time at home, it is important to stay in contact with friends and family.

[Mind provides tips on how to cope during this time](#), and recommends that we all:

- make plans to video chat with people or groups we'd normally see in person
- arrange phone calls or send instant messages or texts
- if you're worried that you might run out of things to talk about, make a plan with someone to watch a show or read a book separately so that you can discuss it when you contact each other
- think about things you can do to connect with people. For example, putting extra pictures up of the people you care about might be a nice reminder of the people in your life
- listen to a chatty radio station or podcast if your home feels too quiet

If you don't have anyone to talk to and [need a friendly chat, call the Samaritans](#) on 116 123.

Money worries

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased financial pressure and concerns for many people. Find out about the [financial support for residents](#) during COVID-19. The charity [Money and Mental Health](#) has developed [guidance on mental health and money](#).

If you've been told by the NHS to self-isolate, either because you've tested positive for COVID-19 or you've been in contact with someone who has tested positive, you [may be able to get some financial help while self-isolating](#).

The charity [Money and Mental Health](#) has developed [further guidance on mental health and money](#).

Bereavement

Losing loved ones is always difficult; and it's normal to experience feelings of grief, especially under the current circumstances. Bereavement support is available through:

You can [refer yourself for bereavement talking therapy support with the South London and Maudsley \(SLaM\)](#).

National organisations such as [Cruse](#) and [The Good Grief Trust](#) also provide bereavement helplines, and can help you to find services.

Healthy lifestyle healthy mind

When we are stressed or feeling low, it is tempting to smoke, drink alcohol or eat unhealthy "comfort food", to try and make us feel better. However, these all have the opposite effect on our bodies, and can make us more depressed.

Alcohol is a depressant. It stops us sleeping well. It may make us do or say things we regret, and it can make us feel low.

Unhealthy food, can make us feel bloated and tired and depressed, and in the long term, increases our risk of diseases like heart disease and some cancers.

Smoking affects our breathing and our lungs. We know that the coronavirus attacks our lungs, so there's never been a better time to think about stopping smoking.

Together these unhealthy choices can weaken our immune system, making us more likely to become unwell, as well as contributing to us feeling low.

- [if you are a smoker and want to quit](#)
- if you want to eat a little more healthily or [lose a bit of weight](#)
- [if you want to cut back on how much alcohol you drink](#)

One of the best things we can do for our health right now is to move more. It helps boost our mood, manage anxiety, and helps us to sleep better. [Get advice on moving more](#) .

Staying at home

We are all being asked to [stay at home from 5 November 2020](#). Whether you are working from home or self-isolating, (or both), there are things you can do to take care of your mind as well as your body. It's good to think about a daily routine you can stick to every day.

[Every Mind Matters](#), [Mind](#) and the [Art of Work](#) have some helpful practical advice on staying at home and also working from home.

Library of things to do at home

From free films to online events, visit your [stay at home library](#) for learning resources and fun ideas for everyone.

