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Resources For Colorectal Cancer Patients and Caregivers

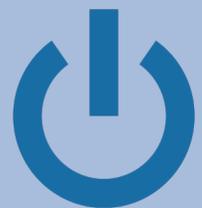
Stress, Coping and Self-Care Tips During a Pandemic



Since the outbreak of COVID-19 has occurred, Canadians have had to adapt our lifestyles to a “new normal”. These changes may include less face-to-face socialization, employment uncertainties or changes to cancer treatment. For most of us, COVID-19 also brings increased stress and anxiety levels, which is totally normal in these circumstances. The Colorectal Cancer Canada (CCC) team hopes to bring you resources tailored toward the needs of a colorectal cancer patient, family member or caregiver during these uncertain times. This resource provides strategies and resources to reduce stress and anxiety and help you care for yourself. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Be kind to yourself!

1. Disconnect as part of your routine

With the ever-changing nature of the outbreak, our news feeds, TVs, newspapers and radio are constantly flooded with information and updates on COVID-19. It can also be difficult to follow a routine when we spend most days inside our homes. Each morning, commit at least 15 minutes disconnected from electronics and news. Take this time to enjoy a coffee, listen to your favourite music, sit on your balcony or look out the window. This will leave you refreshed and ready to take on the day!



2. Laugh

Laughter is a great way to boost your mood and alleviate stress and tension. Some sources even suggest that laughter can improve your immune system! Try watching your favourite comedy or stand up online, or check out cute and hilarious animal videos on YouTube (who doesn't love animal videos?!). Simply search "funny animal videos" and enjoy!



3. Exercise regularly



Exercise is one of the most proven ways to alleviate stress and anxiety. It provides an escape for the mind while strengthening your body and improving overall health. Yoga is one of the best forms of exercise to help tackle anxiety and stress. There are many free online yoga classes that can be completed by beginners from your own home. Check out one of our favourite free virtual teachers here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIY9sFHsEGFYMcL87IMvGCw>. See our Wellness and Exercise During COVID-19 resource for more information!

4. Aromatherapy



Using a scented candle or essential oil can have calming effects to help deal with stress and anxiety. If you choose a candle, we recommend one without paraffin wax (which can produce carcinogenic soot when burned). Some scents that are known for their calming effects include: lavender, rose, sandalwood or chamomile. Try using aromatherapy in a dimly lit room and a cup of hot tea for the full effect!

5. Eat nutritious foods and beverages

Eating healthy foods is a great way to reduce anxiety and improve your overall health. An added bonus is that some people find cooking therapeutic as well. Some foods that are proven to reduce anxiety include: salmon, chamomile or green teas, turmeric, dark chocolate, blueberries, bell peppers and citrus fruits to name a few.



