



Taking care during the COVID-19 Pandemic

While the current situation is causing anxiety and concern, it is important to remember that much is being done to manage the situation and contain the virus as quickly as possible. It's normal to feel overwhelmed or stressed, but there are many helpful strategies to assist in maintaining your mental health during this difficult time.

Try the following strategies:

- Limit exposure to media: Constant and repetitive news can increase stress. Check the news each day so that you feel up to date, but avoid having the news on in the background.
- Source your news from reputable sources, such as the ABC, SBS and other well-known outlets. Social media is generally not a reliable source.
- Learn about the virus and how it is spread, in order to increase your understanding of strategies you can implement. Reliable sources include:
 - <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/coronavirus>
 - <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- Take steps to reduce your need to leave the home, and prepare for possible self-isolation: Consider your needs in terms of food, medications, hygiene supplies and leisure tasks. Do you have enough supplies for a week or so? Can you access delivery services? Remember, essential shops such as food shops and pharmacies will remain open, but planning and feeling prepared can assist with feelings of security.

If you are required to **self-isolate**, due to exposure or directive from Health Authorities, Beyond Blue recommends the following strategies (taken from <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>):

- *Remind yourself that this is a temporary period of isolation to slow the spread of the virus.*
- *Remember that your effort is helping others in the community avoid contracting the virus.*
- *Stay connected with friends, family and colleagues via email, social media, video conferencing or telephone.*
- *Connect with others via the Beyond Blue forums: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/online-forums/staying-well/coping-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>.*
- *Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing.*
- *Keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy foods.*
- *Try to maintain physical activity.*
- *Establish routines as best possible and try to view this period as a new experience that can bring health benefits.*
- *For those working from home, try to maintain a healthy balance by allocating specific work hours, taking regular breaks and, if possible, establishing a dedicated work space.*
- *Avoid news and social media if you find it distressing.*

Other Resources:

- The National Coronavirus Helpline: Ph: 1800 020 080 (operates 7 days a week, 24 hours a day)
- <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-resources>
- <https://headtohealth.gov.au/covid-19-support>

FACILITATE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

Phone: 1300 855 513
Fax: 02 4201 0196

116 Railway St Corrimal NSW 2518
PO Box 285 Fairy Meadow NSW 2519
ABN: 91 619 482 585

Admin@FacilitateOT.com.au
www.FacilitateOT.com.au

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