



AMERICAN
COLLEGE *of*
CARDIOLOGY

STRESS MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

As our nation's health care system and health care professionals are increasingly stressed during the COVID-19 Pandemic, stress management and psychosocial well-being during this time are as important as managing your physical health. Below, please find a compilation of tips and resources about managing stress and anxiety.

Recognize Stress: Feeling stressed is an experience you and many of your colleagues are likely going through; in fact, it is quite normal to be feeling this way in the current situation. New pressures, high demand and stricter occupational health and safety procedures can contribute to this.

Benefits of Stress: Stress and the feelings associated with it are by no means a reflection you are unable to do your job or you are weak. Stress can be useful in keeping you going at your job and providing a sense of purpose.

Steady Yourself: Knowing how to manage your own anxiety always takes a little thought. You're fully prepared to help yourself. You can take steps to calm and steady yourself. Remember what works for *you*. Ask and answer these questions:

- What typically happens to your body when worries mount?
- How worried are you?
- What do you fear the most?
- What usually helps you handle worries?

Relaxation Activities: Practicing relaxation techniques can have many benefits, including: Slowing heart rate, lowering blood pressure and slowing your breathing rate. Below are some well-recognized activities and corresponding resources.

- **Yoga:** Sometimes trying new things and discovering new activities can be a welcome, healthy distraction. Free Yoga resources to consider:
 - **5-Minute Yoga Workouts** (Free on iTunes and Google Play)
A daily set of five yoga moves, with directions and a built-in countdown clock.
 - **Down Dog** has made its apps free for healthcare workers until July 1. Please visit downdogapp.com/healthcare to register your work healthcare domain.
- **Guided Imagery:** Guided imagery is a stress management technique which can calm your body and simultaneously relax your mind. Envision yourself in the midst of a relaxing environment and immerse yourself in the sensory details (sight, touch, smell, taste and sound).

- **Meditation and Mindfulness:** Mindfulness meditation techniques are widely used to manage stress and are especially effective at reducing the stresses of time pressure and excessive workload that make modern health care so difficult.

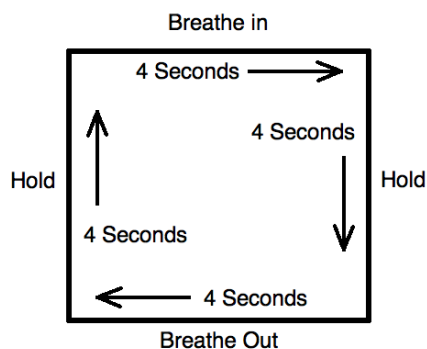
HeadSpace: Offering all U.S. healthcare professionals who work in public health settings free access to Headspace Plus through 2020. Mindfulness for your everyday life. Stress less. Move more. Sleep soundly. Visit www.headspace.com/health-covid-19, input NPI number, location and you can download app with full account and access.

Ten Percent Happier: Offering practical, actionable ways of coping with stress, fear and anxiety. Build resilience and find calm through meditations, podcasts, blog posts and talks. Free with code HEALTHCARE. Coronavirus Sanity Guide available at <https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide>

Pumpkin: A free app with hundreds of meditation sessions, sleep stories and hypnotherapy.

Controlled Breathing: Controlled breathing has been shown to reduce stress, increase alertness and boost your immune system.

- **Diaphragmatic Breathing:** Take a deep breath, expanding your belly. Pause. Exhale slowly to the count of five. Repeat four times.
- **Box Breathing:** A technique used when taking slow, deep breaths. It can heighten performance and concentration while also being a powerful stress reliever.



More information about ACC's Clinician Well-Being Strategy available at <https://www.acc.org/clinicianwellbeing>

Resources and references

United Nations, Briefing note on addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak- Version 1.1

Harvard Business Review, Why Some People Get Burned Out and Others Don't

[Very Well Mind](#)