

Self-care checklist

During this time, self-care is important to ensure we stay well. Our usual routines are likely to have been interrupted and social distancing from friends and family can be a big adjustment.

There are a few ways to support your physical and mental health during periods of self-isolation or quarantine. We've put together this simple checklist to help you, along with a list of support services you can access in a variety of ways if needed.

Remind yourself that this is a temporary situation to slow the spread of the virus and it helps to protect you and others in your community from contracting the virus.

- Keep connected and checking in with friends and family via phone calls, FaceTime, email or other available technologies.
- Establish a new daily routine, this may be different for weekdays to weekends.
- Spend some time outside every day — breathe in the fresh air from your balcony, garden or courtyard. You may want to stop and observe wildlife and connect with nature which has proven benefits for mental health.
- Spend some quiet time in your own space each day.
- Plan your meals and ensure you are keeping a healthy, balanced diet.
- Limit the consumption of alcohol, it is a depressant and can often make you feel worse.
- Do physical activity daily — this may be a walk up and down your driveway, street or in your garden. For at home online exercise workouts suitable for all abilities — check out Council's *GEL Anywhere* program <https://www.geleisure.com.au/group-fitness/gel-anywhere>
- Laugh and smile — watch a funny movie, video or read a funny book. Laughter helps to release endorphins – your body's feel good hormones.
- Prioritise getting a good night's sleep — a good rest will do wonders for how you feel the next day.
- Limit your consumption of news, it can make us more anxious and worried. Stick to reliable government updates at <https://www.health.gov.au> or <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-update>
- If working from home, take regular breaks and where possible, try to stick to set times and set up a dedicated space to work that is separate to where you relax and sleep.
- Practice mindfulness or meditation — this might be the perfect opportunity to create time and space <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/coronavirus-anxiety-resources>
- Take up a hobby, it can provide a stress release and also bring fun and creativity into your day — try painting, woodworking, sewing, or playing an instrument.
- Listen to music you enjoy — music increases the release of endorphins and encourages relaxation and stress relief.

The Australian National Mental Health Commission together with mental health organisations, experts and leaders have also developed #InThisTogether — a national conversation, which shares practical tips online to support the mental health and wellbeing of Australians during COVID-19. For more information, visit <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/InThisTogether>

Stay safe online or learn more about technology

We are heavily reliant on technology during these times, why not take the opportunity to access the many free courses and checklists to stay informed and keep you and your family safe online. Information for parents and carers, seniors and educators can be found at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/covid-19>

Seek support when you need it

It is normal to feel up and down and a bit worried about the current situation, however if you feel you need to seek additional support, there are many organisations offering professional support and a way to connect with you during this time.

If you have children or young people living with you, they may also benefit from accessing professional support services — refer to list below.

We will all need a little extra support during this time, so let's be kind, stay connected, check in with each other, and seek professional support when we need it.

Lifeline National charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.	13 11 14 or online web chat	https://www.lifeline.org.au/
Suicide Call Back Service A nationwide service providing professional 24/7 telephone and online counselling to people affected by suicide.	1300 659 467 or online web chat	https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/
Beyond Blue Provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live.	1300 22 4636 or online chat	https://www.beyondblue.org.au
Kids Helpline Free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged five to 25.	1800 55 1800 or web chat and online resources	https://kidshelpline.com.au/
Headspace (including eheadspace) Provides confidential phone, online and support services for young people aged between 12 to 25.	1800 650 890 Local Headspace Centres Bentleigh 9076 9400 Elsternwick 9076 7500	https://headspace.org.au/covid-19/