

As changing news and uncertainty may add to everyday stress, it is now more important than ever for caregivers to ensure that you are taking care of your own mental health and wellbeing.

We've compiled a few steps to help you relieve stress and improve your wellbeing. In addition, please note that The Ontario Caregiver Organization also offers a 24/7 helpline and live web chat providing information, resources, and support, available at 1-833-416-2273 (CARE) or online at [www.ontariocaregiver.ca](http://www.ontariocaregiver.ca)

## 1. MANAGE YOUR NEWS AND MEDIA CONSUMPTION

At this time, there is a lot of information being shared online, and near-constant news and media coverage of COVID-19. While it's good to stay informed, observe how your media consumption makes you feel, and bear in mind that not all information sources are unbiased. If being immersed in this news or social media speculation brings on feelings of stress and anxiety, consider limiting your engagement with media, and instead check a trusted source once or twice a day. [The Government of Ontario Ministry of Health](http://www.ontario.ca), and [Public Health Canada](http://www.canada.ca) are reliable sources of up-to-date information. Managing media consumption may mean calling family, instead of messaging them on social media, or watching TV on streaming platforms, rather than skimming news channels. Be mindful of how news and media make you feel and limit your engagement accordingly.

## 2. HAVE A BACKUP PLAN

Should you become ill, having a backup plan in place means that you can focus on getting better, and not worrying about your loved one's care. Expand your loved one's circle of care, and see if there are neighbours, friends, or family members who might be able to help, should you become ill. Ensure you have documented detailed care instructions, including contact information for doctors, clinics, occupational

therapists, and pharmacies. Making sure that your loved one has refills available of medication, extra nutritional supplements (including feeding tube supplies), and soap/hand sanitizer, rubbing alcohol, may provide some peace of mind.

## 3. FOCUS ON YOUR OWN WELLBEING

You can best take care of your loved one when you're feeling healthy, both physically and mentally. Whether you prefer a higher-intensity workout, or a mindful meditation, there is a YouTube fitness tutorial video for everyone. Take a few minutes every day to recharge. Check out one of these videos:

- [Yoga for Anxiety and Stress](#)
- [Yoga for Stress Relief – 7 Minute Practice](#)
- [5 Min Cardio for Beginners – No equipment](#)
- [30 Min Low-Impact Dance Grooves](#)
- [3-minute Mindful Breathing Meditation](#)

## 4. STAY CONNECTED WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Physical distancing doesn't mean social isolation. Technology can be used to maintain regular routines and stay connected with friends and family. Invite a friend for a virtual coffee or cook dinner together over video. Several streaming services have introduced "party" extensions and apps that allow users to remotely watch shows or movies while video chatting at the same time, including: [Netflix Party](#), [Rave](#), [Disney Plus Party](#), [Watch2gether.com](#), [YouTube Party](#), and [KAST](#) for setting up watch parties. With all of the technology available, you may even find it easier than ever to stay connected with your loved ones.