

Managing Stress for Healthcare Workers Providing Coronavirus Care and their Families

The physical and mental health of healthcare workers is always important, but crucial during this pandemic.

Stress and exhaustion can come from:

- The extreme level of vigilance due to higher exposure to very ill patients;
- Rapidly changing guidance from experts;
- Possible separation from family and other supports;
- Others' fear of contact with you which can lead to distressing isolation from partners, children and others;
- Guilt about working long hours;
- Childcare and eldercare needs;
- Fear that poses a conflict with long-held commitments to patients and coworkers.

Preparedness Helps:

- Seek as much training as you can in the use of protective equipment.
- Check CDC recommendations frequently.
- Communicate with supervisors and colleagues if you have questions.

Ways to Manage Fears and Anxieties:

- Get the facts. Stay informed with the latest health information. See the dedicated CDC website or your State's Department of Health website.
- Even if you cannot see your family, friends, faith community members, yoga partners and others, use technology to stay in touch. Disinfect devices frequently, of course.
- Take pause breaks whenever possible. Even a few minutes of abdominal breathing and brief meditations can give your tired brain a restorative assist. See www.coastlineeap.com (log-in with employer name) for recorded examples.
- Attention to basic needs is not selfishness. Eat well, sleep, meditate, exercise.
- Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you spend watching or listening to upsetting media coverage. Although you'll want to keep informed, remember to take a break from watching the news and focus on the things that are positive in your life and things you have control over.
- Help your loved ones remember the facts. Someone who has a cough or a fever does not necessarily have coronavirus. Self-awareness is important in not stigmatizing others in our community.
- Seek additional help. Individuals who feel an overwhelming worry or anxiety can seek professional mental health support and additional resources through Coastline EAP. This service is for your families as well.

Coastline EAP

1-800-445-1195 for confidential consultation and support. www.coastlineeap.com