

Q. How can I prevent COVID fatigue?

A. If you're tired of COVID-19 hanging over your head, you're not alone. Even if you've practiced social distancing, worn a mask, and followed restrictions and guidelines in your area, it isn't easy.

Pandemic fatigue is a real thing

It can make you feel sad, bored, lonely, anxious, fearful, angry, and frustrated.¹ Left unchecked, you might be tempted to ignore warnings from public health officials and put yourself and others at risk.

Is COVID-19 taking a toll on your health and happiness?

It often looks like this:

- You know something isn't right.
- You're sad or anxious.
- You're not sleeping well.
- You're tired of feeling isolated.
- Maybe you don't feel like doing anything.
- Or you're ready to ignore all the warnings and go back to life the way it was.
- If you're feeling any of these things, you might be experiencing COVID fatigue.
- So what can you do about it?²

Make a choice to stay healthy

Wash your hands with soap and water. Scrub for 20 seconds. Rinse and dry.

- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water isn't available.
- When you're out of the house, keep your social distance. Stay six feet apart.



- Follow guidelines in your area for social gatherings and wearing a mask.

Be flexible with changing guidelines

Right now an estimated 60 million people worldwide have tested positive for COVID-19. The virus has claimed the lives of 1.4 million people, and the infection rate is rising rapidly.

Over the next few weeks and months, be flexible as public health guidelines and restrictions may change.

Keep essential supplies on hand

With another spike in COVID-19 cases, many stores are limiting the purchase of things like:

- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Disinfectant
- Masks and gloves
- Hand sanitizer

Now isn't the time to rush to the store and buy as much as you can. But having an essential supply will help you keep your environment germ-and-virus free and give you peace of mind.

Exercise

Even if you're following all the guidelines, COVID fatigue can still take a toll on your health and happiness, because:

- You may be spending a lot more time at home.

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- You may be watching more TV or spending time online.
- You may not see your extended family and friends as much as you'd like.
- You're worried about COVID-19 spreading to you, your family, or friends

Sound familiar? If you're feeling like you've got the COVID blues, regular exercise, such as brisk walking, can help, too.³

Aim for 30 minutes a day. But if you don't have 30 minutes, even smaller amounts of physical activity can help:

- Boost your mental health
- Improve your mood
- Help you feel more energetic
- Help you feel good about yourself and how you are taking better care of your body
- Prevent many serious health problems including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and worsening depression
- Strengthen your immune system

Looking for a little help to prevent pandemic fatigue?

Follow these tips to protect your physical and mental health.

References

- 1 Thagard, P. (2020). What is COVID fatigue? *Psychology Today*. From: <https://tinyurl.com/yxn4k3sa>
- 2 Parrish, C., (2020). How to deal with coronavirus burnout and pandemic fatigue. Johns Hopkins Medicine. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y4p4as6b>
- 3 American College of Sports Medicine. (2017). Exercise is medicine. From: <http://www.exerciseismedicine.org/>