



Partners in Prevention

Taking Health & Safety to Higher Ground

March 2020

YOUR GAMEPLAN TO LIVE

MANAGING FEAR



Fear is an emotion that shouldn't be ignored but remaining in a state of fear over a long period of time isn't good for us in any way – body, mind, or spirit. It weakens our immune system and causes blood pressure to rise and stress hormones to abound, which can make us feel sick and eventually BE sick. Anxiety thrives on uncertainty, and our entire nation – in fact the world, is in a state of extreme uncertainty. People who are anxious even without COVID 19 lurking, are often very sensitive to uncertain threats – even threats that we don't even know exist. It is called anticipatory anxiety.

Is there anything we can do? YES.

Those of us who are prone to anxiety (even without the current pandemic), are uncomfortable if we think we are not in control. Obviously, we can't be in control of the course and outcome of this pandemic – we need to accept that, but we CAN be in control of what we can do.

Have a plan.

Be as prepared as you can realistically be for the disruptions that this situation is going to cause. You should be able to tell yourself that you've done your best. Also, identify trusted sources of information so that you aren't listening to everything that comes along. Not all information is going to be true or helpful, and you don't need to be listening or reading about this 24/7. Too much is just overload and can easily heighten your anxiety.

Take care of yourself.

Make quality and quantity of sleep a priority. Not only are we more susceptible to illness when we don't get enough sleep, it also makes us more anxious.

Exercise. Moderate to vigorous daily exercise is healthy. Not only does it help to prevent heart disease, diabetes, and other serious conditions, it has been found to enhance immunity. "Contemporary evidence from epidemiological studies shows that leading a physically active lifestyle reduces the incidence of communicable (e.g., bacterial and viral infections) and non-communicable diseases (e.g., cancer), implying that immune competency is enhanced by regular exercise bouts (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5911985/k>)".



Powerhouse Immunity Spritzer

Elderberry, apple cider vinegar and pomegranate all have health benefits including reports of increased immunity.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon elderberry syrup
- 1/3 cup pure pomegranate juice
- Sparkling water
- Lemon or lime to garnish

Directions:

Bring vinegar, elderberry syrup and pomegranate juice just to a simmer in a small saucepan. Remove from heat. Serve divided between 2 glasses. Serve warm or chilled over ice, with a splash of sparkling water and garnished with lemon or lime (if desired).

Serves 2

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Exercise has an effect on our moods. Choose something that you like to do as you are more likely to stick with an activity that is enjoyable. Many people find that engaging large muscle groups in a rhythmic and repetitive way works best for them. This would include walking, jogging, cycling, or using an elliptical as examples. Other people prefer yoga or Pilates, or something else. Shoot for 20 – 60 minutes as you relax body and mind. (Don't overdo it. Going from no exercise to a ton of exercise is not going to be ideal). Try not to think of whatever is causing you stress, and definitely do not plug into social media or news stations during this time.

Eat well. There are foods that are calming and foods that will just make anxiety worse. This is NOT the time to be eating fried foods, refined sugars, starchy carbs with little nutritional value, and alcoholic beverages. They might feel good for a little while, but later they can make you feel much worse. Examples of the best calming foods include blueberries, whole grains, almonds and brazil nuts, fatty fish (high in omega 3), turkey, pure dark chocolate, yogurt, kale and asparagus.

Stay engaged with other people - people supporting people. You may be practicing social distancing, or even be under quarantine but try to stay connected to others through whatever means works for you – including social media if there are no people nearby.

Distract yourself. Go ahead and engage yourself in frivolous distraction. Read books or watch shows that are just total entertainment. Play with the kids or the dog and let yourself really get into it. Do things that are mindless.

Practice relaxation and meditation. This can help you in so many ways. It is worth it to take the time to download an app or watch a video (there are many available in the app store and online) to help you if you aren't already practicing meditation. Give your mind and your body a mini vacation. It is most beneficial if you can do it every day. It works, and you will feel so much more comfortable and better able to deal when you aren't a bundle of nerves.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5911985/k>
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/exercising-to-relax>
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2095254618301005>
<https://now.tufts.edu/articles/coping-anxiety-time-pandemi>

WHAT'S THE CLEANEST WAY TO DRY YOUR HANDS AFTER WASHING THEM?

As cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) climb around the world, people are on high alert looking for ways to protect themselves and avoid germs. One tried-and-true method to help limit the spread of germs is, of course, washing your hands. But we need to talk about drying your hands. At this point, we're likely all well aware that washing your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water is considered the gold standard. But the last step—*drying* your freshly washed hands—is all too often overlooked. And as it turns out, drying isn't a step you want to miss.

The importance of drying completely.

According to one 2018 review in the *Journal of Infection Prevention*, not drying your hands in a medical setting (either at all or not well enough) is an infection risk, as wet



Easy Vegetable Flatbread Pizza

Ingredients:

- 2 large whole grain pitas or flatbreads as the "crust"
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1/2 - 3/4 cup of your favorite vegetables, chopped small
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup pizza/tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup light mozzarella cheese shredded
- Grated parmesan cheese
- Pepper, garlic, oregano

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place pita or flatbread on baking sheet. Bake 5 minutes. Coat small skillet with olive oil cooking spray. Over medium heat, sauté vegetables until crisp-tender. Spread desired amount of pizza sauce on flatbreads or pitas. Sprinkle with cooked vegetables and mozzarella cheese. Add a sprinkling of grated parmesan, pepper, garlic, oregano if desired. Serve.

Look for healthy varieties of pita or flatbread that may contain whole grains, flax seed, quinoa, etc. There are gluten-free options as well. You can also make your own.

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hands increase the chances for cross-infection and environmental contamination. That's because the transmission of bacteria, which clings to moisture, is more likely to happen between wet skin than dry. Drying your hands takes care of the moisture, as well as some of that transference if you're using a paper towel, which will go in the trash. Not only that, but over-washing (especially with hot water) can strip the skin of its natural oils, causing the skin to dry out and crack. This open skin is then at a greater risk of infection. But one study by Rutgers University from 2017 actually found that hot water *is not* any more effective in killing germs than cold.



Immunity-Boosting Turmeric Chicken Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. avocado oil
- 1/2 small yellow onion finely diced
- 2 large carrots peeled and chopped
- 1 large parsnip peeled and chopped
- 3 stalks celery chopped
- 3 cloves garlic minced
- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts chopped
- 2 tsp. dried parsley
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt (to taste)
- 3 cups chicken bone broth
- 2/3 cup canned coconut milk—full fat
- 1 small head kale chopped

Directions:

Heat the avocado oil in a large stock pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add the carrots, parsnips, celery and garlic and continue sautéing, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are softened but still al dente, about 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the chopped chicken and cook just long enough to brown the meat, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients, stir well and cover. Cook at a gentle simmer, stirring occasionally, for at least 30 minutes (ideally one hour). Taste soup for flavor and add more sea salt if desired. Serve and enjoy!

Servings: 3 to 4 people

Recipe and photo: <https://www.theroastedroot.net/immunity-boosting-turmeric-chicken-soup/>

What about air dryers?

Once your hands have been washed, there is a proper way to dry them. According to the World Health Organization, hands should be dried thoroughly with either a paper towel or a warm air dryer. But there are studies that suggest hand dryers actually blow germs around, which is why they may be best avoided, especially in settings like hospitals and clinics. If they're your only option, it's better than nothing to get your hands dry. However, disposable paper towels would seem to be the best bet. (Cloth towels can hold on to germs.)

As we ride out coronavirus, we all want to do our best to stay healthy and germ-free. Washing and drying your hands is an easy way to help yourself out (and those around you). And don't forget to give your hands a little extra moisture TLC with hand creams from all that scrubbing.

Article: <https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/whats-the-cleanest-way-to-dry-your-hands-after-washing-them>

OUTDOOR EXERCISE HAS AMAZING BENEFITS!

Connect with Mother Nature and Boost Your Immune System

Exercising outdoors can boost your immune system while helping you to feel grounded as you deepen your connection to the environment, enhance your appreciation for the beauty around you, and soak up that Vitamin D.

Improve Mood and Reduce Depression

Outdoor exercise provides a mental health boost beyond that of indoor gyms. Moving outdoors has been shown to reduce anger and depression and improve mood (Barton and Pretty, 2010). Exposure to sunlight enhances vitamin D production, which may be partially responsible for this mood-enhancing effect (Kerr et al., 2015). You don't have to run a marathon or crush an outdoor boot camp to reap the benefit. Even low-intensity activities, like walking or gardening, will do. For a quick afternoon pick-me-up, head outside for a 15-minute walk break, and return to work feeling energized (<https://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/lifestyle/blog/6360/get-out-5-benefits-of-outdoor-exercise/>).

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Enhance Self-esteem

Research shows that as little as five minutes of outdoor exercise can improve self-esteem (Barton and Pretty, 2010). Any outdoor location will do but being near greenery or water enhances this effect. Interestingly, low- to moderate-intensity physical activity shows greater improvements in self-esteem than high-intensity outdoor exercise (<https://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/lifestyle/blog/6360/get-out-5-benefits-of-outdoor-exercise/>).



Cost

Free is a good amount to spend on your fitness!

Easy Access

You can go it alone or with a friend, and no extra time needed to get to and from your workout destination. There are lots of opportunities for walking, running, biking and more in your local neighborhoods, hills and trails, school tracks, parks, etc. under the wide-open sky.

Be Aware of Your Environment

PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING (6 feet between you and others). Not all outdoor areas are exercise-friendly but being aware and avoiding hazards will make your workout a positive experience. Weather conditions, traffic, bugs (think ticks, venomous spiders, wasps, etc.), animals, and unsafe areas are a few things to take into consideration. Dress for the weather, stay hydrated, and be aware of your environment.

Have Fun

Time spent outside is great for your body, mind, and spirit. It can aid in sleeping well and feeling your best. Even a short time being active outside is beneficial. Soak in nature and think of what you are thankful for in your life. All you have to do is go!

At Occupational Athletics, we know that the future of healthcare is in the *prevention* of illness and injuries.

It is our mission to provide preventative care utilizing sports medicine principles and lifestyle modification training to create an atmosphere of health, safety, and performance to allow employees to enjoy an enhanced quality of life and reach their retirement—and beyond—SUCCESSFULLY!



Immunity-Boosting Sweet Green Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup tightly packed spinach
- 1 cup tightly packed kale
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 cup iced green tea
- 1 cup frozen mango chunks
- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple chunks
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated ginger
- 1/2 lemon, juiced

Directions:

Add the spinach and kale to a blender with the milk and tea and blend well. Add the frozen fruit, ginger and lemon and blend until smooth. If the smoothie is too thick, add more almond milk or tea a little at a time.

Serves 2



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