

# Supporting your mental wellbeing

If you feel worried or anxious about COVID-19, please seek support. At MSD, we offer a range of support options for you.

## Counselling and Coaching

Our EAP provider Benestar offers access to counseling and coaching as well as a lot of self-help resources including support around COVID-19.

Call 0800 360 364, or email [counsellingsupportnz@benestar.com](mailto:counsellingsupportnz@benestar.com) to arrange a counselling session. These are all phone or video based at present.

Or you can go to the [Benestar](#) to find a counsellor or access self-help resources. Use the MSD company token: (msd) and password: (m22) to register, then sign up with your email address to get full access to the Benestar portal Benehub.

## Download the Benestar app

You can also download this as a mobile app – search Benestar in your app store.

If you get stuck, [there are detailed instructions here](#).

## Wellbeing@MSD

On the wellbeing@MSD pages you'll find relevant resources and support to help you keep healthy and well.

## Peer Supporters

[Our peer supporters](#) are skilled staff in a variety of roles across MSD who are available to help you with your wellbeing and guide you to appropriate supports and services.

## Be kind to yourself

We are all having to adjust to sudden changes in the way we communicate, work, travel and live our lives in general. This can be anxiety provoking and frustrating. We'll be supporting you with simple

guidance on how to look after your mental health and get through this tricky period in our lives:

Right now, many people are feeling anxious, stressed, worried and scared. These feelings can manifest in a number of ways; headaches, constant worry, needing reassurance, procrastination, lack of patience, panic attacks, stomach issues, overthinking, sleeping problems and so on. Anxiety is a normal fear response to the things we cannot control.

Here are some suggestions of things you can do to help manage anxiety and improve your general wellbeing. Try applying a few of these strategies consistently for a period of time and see if you notice a difference.

## Mental Wellbeing

- **Notice what you are telling yourself.** Many of our anxious thoughts are not facts and we don't have to believe or follow them.
- **Learn to accept what you cannot control.** We don't have to like the situation but we can stop wasting our energy on fighting it.
- **Proactively do some things you can control.** Set yourself three goals to achieve every day, either work or personal.
- **Reduce media exposure.** Don't check the news all the time and set a limit on social media, it might make you more anxious.

## Physical Wellbeing

- **Exercise is more important than ever.** It reduces anxiety, improves mood and strengthens our immune system. If you're too nervous to go outside, try out any of the many routines now available online.
- **Establishing routines can help you normalise the current situation.** Routines make us feel more in control.
- **Take a one-minute stretch break whenever you can throughout the day.** Stand up, change positions and stretch to get your blood flowing.
- **Schedule time to go outside.** It'll make you feel less isolated and Vitamin D from the sun also helps our immune system and your mood.

## Social Wellbeing

- **Find a close workmate or a friend and try to briefly connect with them each day.** It is important to talk about how you feel with someone you trust.
- **Get out of your bubble to get some sun and fresh air.** It's good to separate from the people around you every now and then.

- **Minimise use of your devices before you go to bed.** It is great to connect with others but it can also increase anxiety, besides, the blue light will affect the quality of your sleep.
- **Connect with a friend or whānau member who you haven't talked to in a while.** Do video calls in place of texts.

It's normal and natural for you to be experiencing varying levels of anxiety right now. The important thing is to acknowledge how you feel, be kind to yourself, take it one day at a time and apply some of the good practices listed above.

## **Benestar Coronavirus Resources**

### **For all staff**

[Benestar - Building Resilience Fact Sheet \(PDF 478.04KB\)](#)

[Benestar - Fatigue Fact Sheet \(PDF 412.21KB\)](#)

[Benestar - Health Anxiety Fact Sheet \(PDF 1.04MB\)](#)

[Benestar - Supporting children throughout the coronavirus pandemic \(PDF 183.18KB\)](#)

### **For staff who work from home**

[Benestar - Keeping fit whilst working from home \(PDF 697.59KB\)](#)

[Benestar - Work from Home Infographic \(PDF 366.2KB\)](#)

### **For Managers**

[Mental Health Foundation](#)

[Health Navigator](#)

[Anxiety New Zealand](#)

[Need to Talk?](#)