



Strength

Coping with COVID-19

Closing your office. Opening it back up. Dealing with stressed-out patients. And coping with your own anxiety. How do you manage work stress when there's no "business as usual"?

Your new normal

You're a professional. And you take care of your patients. But how do you deal with the stress of serving patients during COVID-19?

Some people are anxious about the spread of the virus. So you want to do what you can to make them comfortable while still serving them.

Put guidelines in place and communicate them ahead of time. If patients get upset, you can:

- Take them to a private area
- Let them vent
- Provide reassurance
- Communicate clearly
- Ask them to leave if they become abusive

And remember to manage your own feelings. It's easier to calm others if you act calm.

Respect your stress signals

You're a pro when it comes to reading your patients' vital signs. But how about your own? Do you know when your stress level is too high?

Recognize your stress symptoms and respect the need to help yourself. For starters, de-fuse with some of the following steps.

Take a break during the day

Even if things aren't busy right now, you want to make self-care a priority. It's critical to set aside time for you every day. Robots and computers need re-booting — so do humans.

Even a few minutes can make a difference. Go outside, take some deep breaths call a friend or do anything that soothes you. Taking time for yourself isn't selfish. It's self-sustaining. You can't help others if you're depleted.

Take care of your own needs

Keep your stress in check by maintaining worklife balance. That means taking care of your own needs and having a life outside of work.

Make the most of your time at home. Self-care is critical during this time. Spend time with your family, work out and minimize your news intake. Use your breaks to recharge your batteries.

Ask for help

The pressure of your job can really catch up with you. If you're having trouble sleeping, eating or regulating your stress level, get support.

You can always call us for help. We're available 24/7, with clinical experts ready to assist you.

Remember, you need to stay physically and emotionally well in order to help others. Take care of yourself as part of your dedication to your patients, your loved ones and yourself.

We are here for you and your patients. And here's a **handout** to help them get through this time.

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