

# MANAGING STRESS, ANXIETY, AND SUBSTANCE USE DURING COVID-19

A RESOURCE FOR HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS

The COVID-19 pandemic poses unique challenges for health-care providers, who may be feeling higher than normal stress and anxiety levels from trying to balance the challenges at work and life at home.

These challenges may negatively impact your overall mental health and how you interact with substances like alcohol and cannabis.

## Strategies to help you cope



**Accept and validate your feelings,** understanding that stress and anxiety are normal during challenging times.



**Recognize what's within your control** and focus on those factors to try to mitigate the stress.



**Remember that this is temporary** and will pass.



**Take care of your health** by eating and sleeping well, exercising, and meditating.



**Make time for yourself** with activities you enjoy that are free from COVID-19-related topics.



**Stay connected** with family, friends, and colleagues while still practising physical distancing.



**Reach out for help** by talking to your supervisor or seeking professional support.

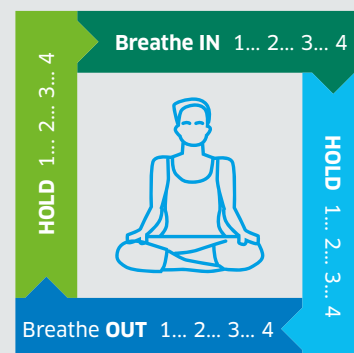


**Monitor your substance use** and pay attention to what triggers it.

- Follow *Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*.
- Follow *Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines*.

## Square breathing

This simple exercise can be done anywhere, even in a challenging environment. Before you enter a patient's room, begin or finish a shift, or whenever you just need to ease some tension, take a moment to slow down your breathing. While this can be more difficult when wearing personal protective equipment like a mask, slower breathing can help calm your nervous system and alleviate the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety.



For more information, visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) or [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/covid19](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/covid19)



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