PANDEMIC RESPONSE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Resources

**DAILY LIFE COPING**
Learn how you can plan, prepare, and cope with stress before and during a pandemic outbreak.

Learn more [HERE](#)

**PREVENT GETTING SICK**
Learn how to protect yourself and others during the pandemic outbreak.

Learn more [HERE](#)

**EXTRA PRECAUTIONS**
Populations that may be at higher risk for more severe complications during the pandemic outbreak.

Learn more [HERE](#)

TRUSTED RESOURCES

Your safety and the safety of your family and friends is very important. Deciding which resources are the best for information can be difficult. To help support you, visit resources from trusted and reliable sites.

[World Health Organization](#)
[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
[Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)
[American Behavioral](#)
As adults, most of us welcome sleeping with open arms. Long gone are the days where we fight off naps or wish we could stay up all night with our friends. Instead, we wish our bosses would implement a mandatory napping hour each day at work.

Sleeping is crucial to our health—physically and mentally. Our brains are recharging during sleep and for babies, children, and teens, sleep supports growth and development.

A good night’s sleep improves learning and focus, and helps with decision making and creativity. Not getting enough sleep actually alters activity in parts of the brain making things more difficult, such as problem-solving and controlling your emotions. Sleep deficiency has been linked to depression and suicidal thoughts. In children and teens, sleep deficiency can lead to stress, lower grades, mood swings, and not getting along well with others.
Our physical well-being depends heavily on getting enough sleep. Fertility and puberty rely on good sleep, as well as our immune system which prevents us from getting sick too often. Safety is also compromised if we don’t get enough sleep, affecting our job performance, reaction time, and ability to drive. Sleep deficiency is linked to:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Kidney disease
- High blood pressure
- Stroke

### The Sleep Cycle

The circadian rhythm is a 24 hour cycle that our internal body clock follows. There are many hormones that help our body follow that important rhythm.

- Adenosine: a hormone that rises throughout the day that eventually signals your body to go to sleep as the levels peak. Adenosine is broken down during sleep to start the cycle over.
- Melatonin: your body releases this hormone when it starts getting dark and begins making you drowsy.
- Cortisol: this hormone is released as the sun comes up, preparing your body to wake up.

Other factors affect how in sync our bodies remain with our internal clock, such as artificial light. Our body clock is constantly receiving cues from the environment and reacts strongly to light and darkness. Artificial light, such as television or phones, can disrupt our natural transition to sleep each night.

Our work schedules can also affect our sleep cycle, especially for those who work overnight. Special measures are needed to help your body find its circadian rhythm, such as getting blackout curtains for your bedroom during the day.

Those with chronic health issues often struggle to get a good night’s sleep. These conditions include but are not limited to heart disease, diabetes, sleep apnea, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), stress, and anxiety.

The rhythm of the body clock changes with age, as well. As babies and children are growing, they need more sleep. Studies have shown that teenagers tend to go to sleep later and wake up later, because melatonin levels peak later in the 24 hour cycle.

### Improve Your Sleep Habits

There are steps we can take to improve our sleep patterns, resulting in improvements in health, productivity, and overall happiness.

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day, even on the weekends.
- Try to keep changes to your schedule within one hour.
- Allow yourself one hour before bedtime to unwind and relax, avoiding exercise and artificial light.
- Avoid heavy meals within a couple hours of bedtime.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks and nicotine before bedtime.
- Avoid consuming caffeine after 12 pm. Effects of caffeine can last up to 8 hours.
- Keep your bedroom dark, cool, and quiet.
- Try relaxation techniques before bed, such as a hot bath.
- Spend time outside every day if you can; be physically active.
- If you nap, limit it to 20 minutes and try to nap earlier in the afternoon as opposed to too close to bedtime.

If you’re concerned you aren’t getting quality sleep or enough sleep, please talk to your doctor about options. Keep a sleep diary for a couple of weeks, noting when you go to bed, how often you wake up, how well you’re sleeping, how rested you feel, etc. Include naps, caffeine and alcohol use, and medications you take.

Sleeping is one of the basic human needs and it is essential for living a healthy life. Take this opportunity to become aware of your own sleeping habits and take the necessary steps to improve the quality of your life.
Employee Assistance Program

Job Stress?  Parenting Stress?

Financial Stress?  Relationship Stress?

Sometimes the demands of our professional and personal lives become complicated and overwhelming. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers you and your dependents assistance with a variety of work life issues:

- Family and Marital Issues
- Legal and Financial Concerns
- Eldercare
- Stress
- Grief and Loss
- Child and Adolescent Issues
- Work Related Issues

- All eligible employees and household members are able to receive up to six (6) confidential short term counseling visits, per participant, per issue, per year.
- This is a pre-paid benefit that is no cost to you.
- The EAP is not only free to all qualified employees and their households, but it is also confidential.
- American Behavioral clinicians are well versed in helping clients of all ages, from children to the elderly.
- Providers are accessible at numerous locations throughout the area.
- The EAP can assist with many different types of issues and concerns.

American Behavioral EAP is available when you need them, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The EAP will also coordinate with the Phoenix Union High School District’s healthcare plans, for cases that require treatment under your medical benefit.

*Note: Participants are triaged via phone interview to determine the appropriateness of the issue for EAP (Short term counseling). For more information, or to obtain a referral to a provider near you, please call 1-800-925-5327 or visit their website at http://americanbehavioral.com/*
Online Doctor Visits Any Day, Any Time.

What is BlueCare Anywhere?
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona (BCBSAZ) members can see a board-certified doctor, counselor, or psychiatrist on a computer or mobile device using the BlueCare® Anywhere telehealth app. It’s the easy way to get immediate care—any day, any time. Why wait to start feeling better? Just sign in and connect to your live video visit.

What services are offered?

**MEDICAL**
You don’t have time to be sick. And whether you’re at home, at work, or on vacation, a board-certified doctor is ready to connect with you whenever and wherever you need help. For common health issues like headaches, fevers, rashes, and stomach bugs, simply click to select a provider and start feeling better.

**COUNSELING**
Sometimes you just need to talk things out. When life’s challenges get too heavy, a certified counselor or psychologist is a click away.* They can help you with concerns such as depression and anxiety as well as stress caused by grief, divorce, parenting challenges, job loss, and other major life changes.

**PSYCHIATRY**
Psychiatric care is here whenever and wherever you need it.* Connect with a board-certified psychiatrist face to face by video visit, or by phone from the privacy and comfort of your own home. Experienced psychiatrists can help you address common behavioral health challenges, and provide assessments, evaluations and treatment.

DOWNLOAD THE BlueCare Anywhere APP OR VISIT BlueCareAnywhereAZ.com NOW.

*Counseling and psychiatric care are by appointment.
Self-Care Tips

Self-care is important to help you care for yourself and maintain your personal well-being.

Transition Routines: Give yourself time to move from one set of work to another. You have no built in margin between your work life and home life. You may need to be more intentional about moving from one set of work to the next. Here are some examples:

- If you are working from home, you no longer have that commute that signals to your brain that it is time to transition.
  - Try taking a walk around the block as a substitution for your commute
- Let’s call the area you have set up as your home office your “command center”
  Before going to the kitchen to make dinner, take a pause, walk to a quiet room or space and listen to one of your favorite songs. You can also take between two and five minutes to pause, look out the window or take a brief walk to reflect on what you are most proud of from your day of work or what you are most looking forward to in the evening to come.

Mindfulness: We will all be multi-tasking way more than usual. many of us will be working from home with children nearby and taking on extra duties as we determine how we make everything work. As often as possible, create time to focus on doing just one thing at a time. Mindfulness does not always require carving out time for meditation; you can make just a few simple tweaks in your day to increase mindfulness.

- Working on a project that does not require ongoing or close communication with other team members? Try to close out chat and email notifications while you are head down on the project so that you can mindfully focus on the task at hand. If you are worried about missing an important message, set a timer to remind you to check back in an hour.
- 5-4-3-2-1: When your anxiety sends you down a rabbit hole, which can easily happen right now, take a moment to notice five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, one thing you can taste. This practice can bring you back into the present moment and into your body.

Stretching and Movement: Being closed in our houses can make us feel cramped. Stretching can take a few minutes and make our bodies feel more expansive.Try this stretch to help you open up your body throughout the work day.

- Put your right hand on your left shoulder and put your left arm behind your back. Tip your head to the right, away from the shoulder you are holding. Then, look down at your right shoulder. Finally, tip your head to the right and rotate back; imagine you are trying to take a peak at something over your left shoulder. Hold each position for 3-5 seconds while breathing deeply and then repeat on the other side.

Gratitude: Feelings of scarcity are common in crisis. Gratitude is the practice of noticing and becoming mindful of your thankfulness. Gratitude works even if you don’t share it with others. Simply pausing to notice your gratitude can have a lot of helpful responses for your well-being.

Nourishing Food: Food is central to our sense of comfort. It is also key to our immune systems. Try to find a balance between comfort and health. Remember, healthy food is full of vitamins and nutrients. The healthiest foods are close to their natural state (like fresh or frozen vegetables or whole grains) and full of color and flavor. Give yourself permission to avoid the mess of low fat, low carb, high protein, low sodium, etc. Instead, when it comes time to pick food, ask yourself, is this nutritious?

- Make half your plate fruits and veggies. Keep your fats, proteins, and carbohydrates in the right proportions. Every time you eat, try to make half of your meal consist of fruits, vegetables, and/or beans.

Connection: Find a friend. Have one person in mind who isn’t a co-worker or immediate family member that you can call when you need some connection. The reason this person should be outside of our immediate circles is that when we need a break, likely the people closest to us do too. In order to support the resiliency of everyone, call someone who is a layer or two outside of your immediate circle.
Light King Ranch Chicken Casserole

**Ingredients:**
- Cooking spray
- 2 lb. boneless, skinless, uncooked chicken breast cutlets
  - OR 4 cups cubed, cooked chicken breast
- 10.75 oz. canned, low-sodium, condensed Cream of Mushroom soup (1 can 25% less sodium)
- 14.5 oz. no-salt-added, diced tomatoes (1 can) 1
- 5.25 oz. canned, no-salt-added corn kernels (1 can), drained, rinsed
- 1 Tbsp. no-salt-added chili powder
- 14.4 oz. packaged, frozen pepper stir-fry (onions and peppers), thawed and drained of any liquid (1 bag)
- 8 6-inch tortillas (cut into 1-inch strips) 1/2 cup shredded, fat-free cheddar cheese
  - 4 oz. canned, diced green chiles (1 can), drained, rinsed, optional

**Directions:**
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Coat a large nonstick pan with cooking spray and warm to medium-high heat. Add chicken cutlets and sauté until fully-cooked, about 7 to 8 minutes per side depending on thickness. Transfer chicken to a plate and cut chicken into a few pieces to cool quickly. When able to handle, cut chicken into cubes.
- In a large bowl, add condensed soup. Into the bowl, add drained tomatoes, drained corn, and chile powder, along with thawed stir-fry vegetables (and drained green chiles if using). Add cooked chicken and let kids use a spoon to stir mixture until combined.
- Coat a 9-inch by 13-inch Pyrex or baking dish with cooking spray. Cut the corn tortillas into 1-inch strips. Pour 1/3 chicken mixture on the bottom of the dish, using a spatula to make into an even layer. Have kids layer half the tortillas strips on top of chicken mixture. Repeat once more with 1/3 chicken mixture in an even layer and remaining tortilla strips. Then, top with remaining 1/3 chicken mixture in an even layer. Sprinkle cheese on top.
- Bake in oven until warmed through and bubbly, about 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit 5 minutes. Then, cut and serve.

**Nutrition Facts**

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**SOURCE:**
HTTPS://RECIPES.HEART.ORG/EN/RECIPES/KID-FRIENDLY-LIGHT-KING-RANCH-CHICKEN-CASSEROLE