

BC Physician Wellness in COVID-19

Dear BC physician, thank you so much for your hard work during this ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We understand that this is an unprecedented time of stress and anxiety for front line staff.

We have compiled this guide to help you navigate the various resources available. We hope this helps. Stay well, stay healthy.

BC Medical Students

COVID-19 & MY FAMILY

4 things you can do for your kids **RIGHT NOW** (as explained by [Fraser Health](#) & the [U of A](#)):

- 1. Model calm behaviour.** [Helping kids cope](#) starts with reducing your own stress.
- 2. Limit access** to COVID-19 media to once a day.
- 3. Let children guide open discussions** & routinely check in. Watch for [changes in behaviour](#) as this may indicate how they are coping.
- 4. Focus on your child's strengths** & look for the positives in life.



How to **TALK TO KIDS** about COVID-19:

- [BC Children's](#) gives an approach to talking about COVID-19 with your kids.
- This [coloring book](#) about coping after a disaster can help younger kids understand the situation.

Fun Family **ACTIVITIES**:

- **Engaging with friends & family** is protective against burnout. Check out these [FREE exercise & wellbeing apps](#) and [online games](#).
- **Set limits to work times** (emails might not stop, but you CAN choose to put down the phone). Demarcating personal & professional life fosters resilience.
- It's **important for kids to have a routine** and a sense of normalcy. See [50 FREE curated activities](#) with [educational resources](#) sorted by age.

CHILDCARE Options:

- [The BC Gov't](#) can provide essential workers a personalized list of available childcare centers (age 0-12) if they fill [this form](#).
- Childcare (age 5-12) can also be obtained directly from your school.
- BC medical students care deeply about physicians' well being. Complete [this form](#) for **assistance with small tasks** (e.g. childcare, groceries).

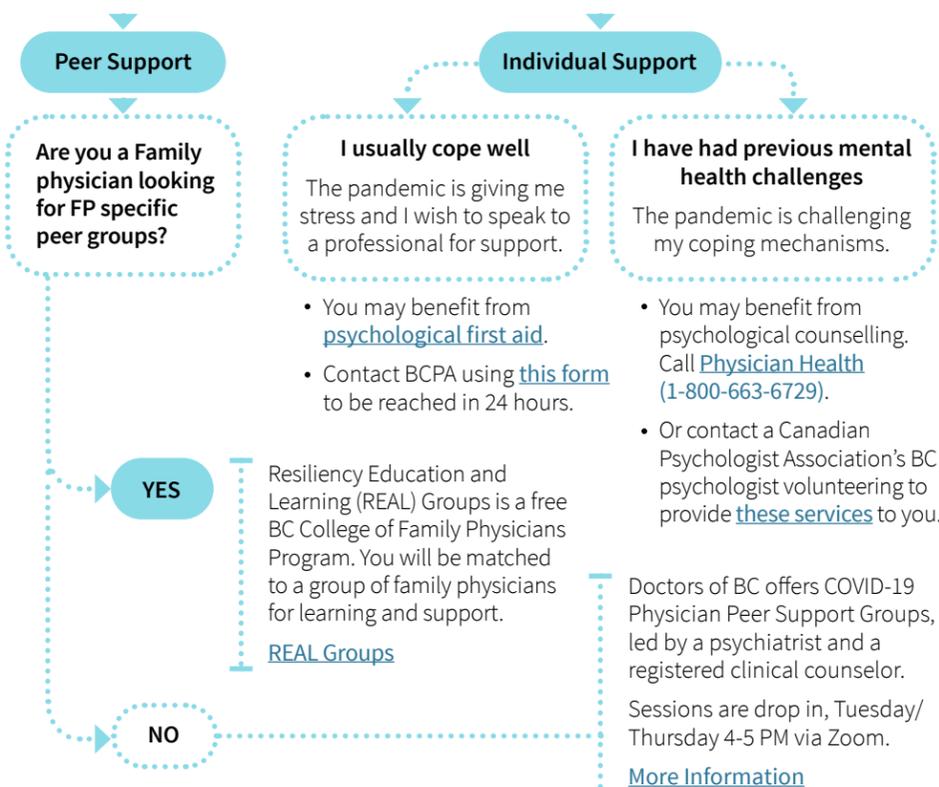
FOOD Options:

- Consider [Instacart](#) for grocery delivery, the ["Staff Meal" Movement](#) for **free or low cost take-out meals**, or one of these [restaurants offering discounts](#). Find restaurants in your area offering promotions for frontline workers [here](#).

Looking for MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT?

If you are in acute distress and feel unsafe, please call 9-1-1. If you are in crisis, call the BC Crisis Hotline (1-800-SUICIDE).

Many groups have come together to offer physicians free psychological services during the pandemic. The [BC Physician Health Program](#) is also always available.



MANAGING ANXIETY

It is certain that we face anxiety during these times. We have heard from physicians that your stressors include: increased personal risk, risk to family, finances, and consistent messaging of policies during this pandemic. We have compiled some resources to help you cope.

- Joule has made a video [Learning Series](#) for physician wellness during COVID-19.
- [3 Steps to Coping with COVID](#) (Youtube) made by physicians to help colleagues.
- Simple steps recommended by a [Fraser Health Infographic on Managing Anxiety](#).

TRY AN APP



- [Headspace](#) offers guided sleep, movement, and meditation exercises.
- [MindShift CBT](#) provides accessible tools to manage your anxiety.
- Practice breathing exercises with [Breathe2Relax](#).
- Meditate with [Insight Timer](#), [Calm](#), or [Aura](#).
- De-stress with [Colorfy](#), a digital coloring app.

PHYSICIAN BURNOUT...



...has always been an ongoing issue. With the added stressors of COVID-19, we must be even more vigilant in identifying and addressing burnout.

Burnout is identified as a syndrome of chronic workplace stress characterized by:

- Energy depletion or exhaustion
- Increased mental distance, cynicism, or negativism from your job
- Decreased work efficacy (real or perceived)

If you are experiencing burnout, please look to access mental health resources on the bottom left of this page. The [CMA](#) has more information on burnout.



INCREASING MORALE

- Be a **leader**. Strong leadership can offset fears and uncertainties surrounding a crisis and create team cohesion.
- Check in with co-workers regularly. Use a **buddy system** to monitor stress, look out for each other, and provide emotional peer support. Speaking with co-workers can reduce feelings of isolation and normalize personal experiences.
- Don't underestimate the power of **communication**. Encourage and congratulate staff on their work throughout this incredibly stressful and demanding time.

STAY CONNECTED & INSPIRED

- Take a [virtual tour](#) of the Gastown murals dedicated to essential workers.
- Visit [#bchealthcareheroes](#) on Twitter to see posts from our community saluting frontline workers.
- Watch the [Vancouver Quarantine Performance Project](#) showcasing local artists' submissions for song, monologue, short film, and stand-up comedy.
- Stay connected with others online. PHSA is offering free [Zoom Premium](#) for healthcare providers.



WHAT IF:

I need to self-isolate?

Planning is important! Create a self-isolation plan:

- Check your BC Health Authority for **Temporary Staff Accommodation**.
- Arrange for family or yourself to **stay somewhere else**.
- If unable to organize alternative living situations, sleep in a **separate bedroom and bathroom** with good airflow and **avoid face-to-face contact** with others.

I'm worried about infecting my family?

Health authorities are aware of this concern and are looking at solutions. While there's no simple answer, [steps](#) can be taken to minimize risk:

- Create a **decontamination zone at home**: change your outside clothes immediately and wash them separately with hot water.
- **Shower, wash hands** before allowing family near you.

My child gets sick?

- Health Canada has [advice for caregivers](#) of a child with COVID-19. such as:
 - Monitor child's symptoms and **watch for worsening symptoms** (fast/difficulty breathing, confusion, chills, fever for >12 h with medication).
 - **Only one healthy person** should provide care for the child.

For other what if scenarios, visit [Fraser Health's FAQs](#).

CONTACT US: Please reach out to us with any questions, comments, or concerns. bc.msrt.wellness@gmail.com | covid19medstudents.ca