

# health awareness



CTSI

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## COVID-19 RELATED STRESS

While mask mandates are lifting and vaccination rates are going up, people are still dealing with increased stress from the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental health experts are worried that the prolonged stress people faced during the pandemic will result in more mental health issues as people begin to process and deal with how COVID-19 impacted their lives. Studies have shown that prior traumatic experiences, such as major natural disasters or public health crises, have led to increased substance use, post-traumatic stress, and depression.

In a poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation last year, respondents reported they had trouble eating or sleeping, had

more aches and pains, drank more than usual, or were shorter tempered than normal. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in stress and anxiety for many Americans, with 56% reporting at least one adverse health effect. The end of the pandemic does not necessarily mean an end to the stress and upheaval it caused.

### Coping with Stress

Finding non-harmful ways to cope with stress and anxiety is a crucial skill. One approach psychologists recommend is to cultivate resilience, defined as the ability to maintain or regain mental health after a period of adversity. Resilience can help protect against depression, anxiety, and other poor coping habits such as

increased drinking.

Resilience training focuses on emotional, cognitive and mental, physical, and spiritual resilience. Part of resilience training involves accepting that some things are beyond our control, knowing that adversity is temporary, and choosing to focus on what we can control. For instance, in the case of a job loss, take online interest inventories to explore other career opportunities. For a free online resource designed to help people learn resilience, visit [positivepsychology.com/resilience-training-build-resilient-individuals-groups](https://www.positivepsychology.com/resilience-training-build-resilient-individuals-groups).

### Other Ways to Handle Stress

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recom-

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mend the following ways to cope with stress.

- Take a break from the news. Avoid watching, reading, or listening to news about the virus because constantly hearing about the pandemic can be upsetting. This also applies to social media.
- Take care of your body. Do things that keep you healthy like exercise regularly and eat well-balanced meals. Get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs. When you are feeling stressed, try deep breathing exercises or meditating to help you relax.
- Take a break to unwind. Make time for activities that you enjoy, such as taking a walk, reading, or gaming.
- Take time to connect. Reach out to family and friends. Share your concerns with

people you trust. If you begin to feel overwhelmed, contact a crisis helpline or mental health professional.

The CDC offers numerous resources to help individuals, families, and communities cope with pandemic-related stress, at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html). 

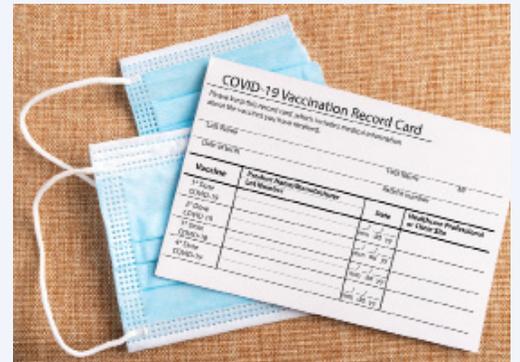
## Benefits Corner

### Resources to Help

The County Health Pool (CHP) cares about the physical and mental health of its members, which is why it has waived out of pocket (OOP) costs for COVID-19 testing for all CHP plans, as well as co-pays for telehealth visits for in network providers through July 20, 2021.

#### Resource Advisor

A member assistance program, Resource Advisor, is included with your life and/or disability benefit. The program can connect you and your household family members with a licensed counselor live 24/7. Members and their family members are eligible for up to three free visits with a counselor for each issue or concern. Counselors can help with finding child care, dealing with family issues, anxiety, stress, or any issue that affects your well-being. Sessions are available by phone at 1-888-209-7840, in-person by appointment, and via video chat using LiveHealth Online. Visit [www.ResourceAdvisor.Anthem.com](http://www.ResourceAdvisor.Anthem.com) for more information. You may login with the program name AnthemResourceAdvisor.



#### LiveHealth Online & LiveHealth Online Psychology

LiveHealth Online is a convenient way to visit with a doctor live, via video. Members can visit with a U.S. board-certified doctor online, any time of day without waiting for an appointment. LiveHealth Online doctors are specially trained for online visits and can prescribe basic medications if needed.

In addition to physician's visits, LiveHealth Online Psychology allows you to schedule a live visit with a licensed psychologist or therapist. Most appointments can be made within four days and tend to last around 45 minutes. Patients need to be at least 18 years old. Note that LiveHealth Online psychologists and therapists do not prescribe medications. LiveHealth Online doctors are available 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

Health plan participants can find information on insurance benefits and coverage for COVID-19 at <https://www.ctsi.org/node/217>. As always, CTSI staff is here to assist you with your health, dental, vision, or life insurance coverage. You can reach us at 303 861 0507.