


Emotional Well-Being



EDUCATION

Taking care of your mental, physical, and emotional health is an essential part of healing. Feeling anxious, stressed, or sad is common following a concussion. This can be a result of normal concussion symptoms or from changes to your typical lifestyle and routines. Nurturing your personal wellbeing can improve your mood and foster your recovery.

Don't hesitate to reach out to your healthcare providers if changes to your mood are significant or do not get better over time.



Prioritize maintaining connections with family and friends. Find alternate ways of staying in touch like video chatting, emails, or texting if you aren't able to meet in person.

Plan time in your schedule to do things that you enjoy and find relaxing. Keep up with hobbies and interests. Modify activities if they increase your symptoms.

Try audiobooks or podcasts instead of reading, or play a board game instead of playing a video game.

Exercise regularly as your symptoms allow. Physical activity can reduce feelings of anxiety and can support both physical and cognitive recovery.

Ask your healthcare provider if you are unsure what type of exercise is safe for you.

Get outdoors. Take a short walk, go to a park, or meet a friend outside. Spending time in nature can improve your mood and wellbeing.


Eat a healthy diet. Maintain your energy by eating balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day. Reduce caffeine and sugar intake to improve sleep.

Stay hydrated. Get a reusable water bottle that you can have at all times. Drink more water when you sweat.

STRATEGIES



Avoid self-medicating with alcohol, cigarettes, vaping, and drugs. These are depressants and can slow your recovery. Only take medications that are prescribed by your physician.

Practice good sleep habits. Adequate sleep fuels your mind and body. 

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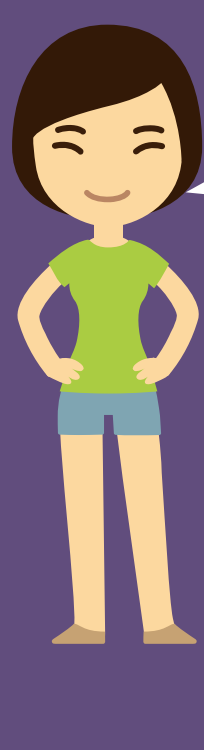
Learn techniques for relaxation and mindfulness. Try tools like Yoga, Tai Chi, Meditation, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Guided Imagery, and Breathing Exercises.

You can search for free video tutorials online or apps to see if they are helpful to you. Regularly practicing these techniques can build physical and emotional resilience.

Manage your time to reduce stress and maximize energy. Focus on activities that you "must" do and that make you feel well. Learn to ask for help and know when to say no. Physical and mental fatigue can slow your recovery.

Create a relaxing environment. Limit factors that can increase worry and stress, like watching the news. Listen to relaxing music to help you feel calm. 

ADDITIONAL TIPS



Be kind to yourself. Your internal dialogue can have a profound effect on your overall well-being. Re-frame thoughts from negative to positive. Recognize your limits and adjust your expectations while you are recovering.

Understand the normal healing process and focus on your strengths. Remind yourself that normal symptoms of concussion are temporary, and you will recover with time.

Reach out and accept support from family or friends. Let people know how you are feeling. Consider seeking out a mental health professional if your symptoms are serious or do not improve.



ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS

GENERAL

- Light exercise/activity
- Light social engagement
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Sleep tools
- Relaxation breathing



VIDEOS



Mindfulness & Meditation

This is a ~14 minute video meditation from Dartmouth. It is geared towards college students. It was recorded in April so that the instructor speaks of COVID-related stress as well.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

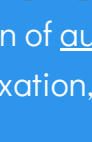
Video recording on YouTube from Johns Hopkins. Includes video of a woman performing these exercises.

Relaxation Breathing

Video produced by us at Shepherd Center as part of a LiveWell RERC project.

Check out free resources for safe exercise and relaxation like these free yoga and meditation videos offered by Love Your Brain Yoga: [Yoga Videos](#) and [Meditation Movement](#).

AUDIO RECORDINGS



Dartmouth has a selection of [audio recordings](#) which includes deep breathing & guided relaxation, guided imagery/visualization, and PMR.

WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS



PMR and Deep Breathing

Written step-by-step guide by Skidmore College.

TECHNOLOGY

- Try a fitness app like [Down Dog](#) to add to your routine and to help you stay motivated.
- Apps like [Super Better](#) and [Insight Timer](#) can foster emotional health and help build resilience.
- Use a tool like [Talk Space](#) if you don't have access to in-person mental health services.

