



SELF-CARE KIT

Brought to you by Ride Don't Hide's Wellness Partner

The Medicine Shoppe[®]
PHARMACY

WELCOME to your Self-Care Kit!

Does the world still feel upside down to you?

The pandemic and the lockdown. Maybe you were just getting used to it all and then came the reopening and the talk of second waves.

Black and Indigenous lives have been lost instead of protected. And mental health checks have turned deadly.

You're not alone. We're all on this rollercoaster together.

We are facing an unprecedented physical health crisis due to COVID-19, but we are also facing an unprecedented mental health crisis.

It's becoming apparent that things won't just snap back to normal. That carving out a new way of life will be more complicated than just opening the doors and stepping back into everyday life.

Now more than ever, we have to prioritize our mental health.

This Kit offers a few ideas to help.

While you bring **MENTAL HEALTH** into the **OPEN**,
don't forget to **TAKE CARE** of **YOURSELF**.



This Self Care Kit is not a substitute for professional advice or treatment. If you feel that you may need medical advice, please consult a qualified health care professional.

Dealing with **STRESS**

Feeling stressed out? Stress can be useful, as it helps us deal with unexpected, new or threatening situations. However, too much stress can cause health problems.

Stress is the natural reaction of the entire body to a situation it perceives as new, unpredictable, or threatening. If a car suddenly speeds toward you, your whole body will go on high alert and into a state of readiness to escape the threat: it secretes adrenaline, your heart rate speeds up, and you start breathing faster. In cases like this, stress is essential to survival!

However, constant stress can cause health problems, and can make it harder to enjoy our everyday life.

To manage stress, we must first recognize our personal sources of stress and then learn what to do to avoid or at least decrease them.



Here are a few steps toward reducing stress:

- Keep a diary to identify your sources of stress and what you did to reduce the stress
- Adopt a healthy lifestyle. Take pleasure in eating a healthy and balanced diet. Cut down on alcohol and caffeine. Don't smoke: Talk to your pharmacist or doctor if you need help to quit smoking. Make sure you have good sleep habits. Work out regularly.
- Accept that not everything has to be perfect. Avoid being too critical with yourself or the people around you.
- Share your concerns, needs, feelings and emotions.
- Take time for yourself. Spend time every day doing an activity you enjoy like: reading, listening to or playing music, playing a sport, spending time with a pet.
- Practise relaxation techniques: yoga, relaxation, deep breathing, meditation, massage therapy, aromatherapy.
- Develop your sense of humour: Laughter is a great way to destress!

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Stress is a common problem in our society, but it's important to seek help from a health care professional if stress is having an impact on your well-being. Reach out to a professional if:

- You have stress-related symptoms or stress impacts your daily activities, sleep or appetite.
- You're having trouble recognizing or managing your sources of stress.

5 Strategies for **BALANCE**

The typical schedule of an average Canadian family is often very full—some would say too full! Juggling work, family and other obligations can be stressful and even exhausting at times. It's therefore wise to achieve a certain balance by setting limits and being as organized as possible.

1. Learn to delegate

Some people insist on doing everything themselves. Whether at work or at home, learn to accept that there are tasks that can be done right—even if they're done differently—by another person.

2. Avoid overloading the family schedule

Many families find themselves overwhelmed trying to squeeze the activities of every family member into their week. Before saying “yes” to Johnny who wants to sign up for football and soccer, take the time to determine how this new activity would fit into the family's schedule, not just into Johnny's schedule. Create a family activity schedule or use electronic calendars to give you a better overall picture before making a decision.

3. Learn to unplug

These days, technology allows us to remain connected and reachable at all times. To achieve a comfortable life balance, learn to unplug from the office in the evenings, on weekends, and during your vacations. If you must remain in contact, don't be afraid to set strict limits with your colleagues.

4. Be physically active

Being physically active on a regular basis helps you manage stress better, have more energy, sleep better, improve your mood, and enjoy overall health benefits.

5. Ask for help

Your pharmacist can be a big help if you're having trouble achieving work-family balance. For example, he or she can synchronize the prescription renewals of all the members of your family—one trip to the pharmacy and you're done!

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to your pharmacist. He or she will make suggestions or refer you to the appropriate resources in your community, as needed.

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8 Tips for Better *SLEEP*

Sleep disorders are a common problem. According to Statistics Canada, approximately 60% of women and 40% of men reported having trouble going to sleep or staying asleep on a regular basis. If you're finding it hard to get a good night's sleep, here are a few tips that could help:

1. Turn off your screens

Turn off your electronic devices at least one hour before going to bed. The light from cellphones, tablets, computers, and TVs stimulates certain zones of the brain and interferes with sleep.

2. Stick to a routine

By going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time every day, even on weekends, you create a routine that your body recognizes.

3. Avoid napping

Regular napping can interfere with your nighttime sleep. If you feel the need to nap, try not to sleep for more than 30 minutes, and limit your naps to the early afternoon.

4. Don't eat before going to bed

It's best not to eat a large meal in the two hours leading up to bedtime as digestion can interfere with your sleep.

5. Avoid stimulants in the evening

Stay away from caffeine and other stimulants (tobacco, soda, chocolate) before bedtime (4 to 6 hours before going to bed).

6. Exercise regularly, but not too close to bedtime

Regular physical activity is an excellent way to enhance sleep. However, it's best to avoid intense exercise in the three hours prior to bedtime.



7. Switch your brain to "off"

Activities like yoga, breathing and relaxation techniques, and meditation are good ways to unwind, and help manage stress that can interfere with sleep. Jot down what's worrying you in a notebook or make a list of things you don't want to forget, to help free your mind before you go to bed.

8. Check whether your medications are interfering with sleep

If you are taking over-the-counter or prescription medication, ask your pharmacist whether they could interfere with your sleep. He or she can propose a solution as needed.

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SELF-CARE Strategies

FROM THE EXPERTS

Recently, Hugh Toner, Medicine Shoppe Pharmacist and mental health champion, sat down for a (socially distanced!) conversation with Margaret Eaton, National CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association, to discuss practical strategies for self care.

Here are some of Hugh's top tips for taking care:

- Slow down
- Spend time with yourself
- See and celebrate your own beauty
- Focus on 'good-to-getting better' not perfect
- Create a love list.
When you're feeling good, make a list of things that help you, like going for a walk, going to the gym, listening to music, talking to a friend, petting a cat. Refer back to it when you need to hit the mood 'reset' button.



WATCH
NOW!

A SELF-CARE BRAINSTORM

Here are some additional ideas to get you started:

- Start a daily gratitude practice. Look for three good things in each day—the sunshine on your face, an email from a friend you miss, a particularly delicious muffin. Before bed, spend a few minutes remembering and writing these down.
- Declutter, organize or clean your space. Set a timer. Cultivate a peaceful and calming environment.
- Get outside. Run. Wiggle your bare toes in the grass. Forest bathe. Sit still near some water. People watch.
- Make bread. Close your eyes while you knead it. Focus on your senses and the process, not the outcome.
- [Try a brand new activity with no pressure to succeed.](#)
- Journal. Paint. Draw.
- [Spend 10 minutes meditating.](#)
- Enjoy a day without a checklist or agenda.
- Take yourself on a date or set aside a few hours to have an adventure.
- Try saying some affirmations out loud. It's okay if you laugh.
- [Sweat. Stretch. Dance. Swim. Move.](#)
- Therapy.





WEEKLY Self-Care Scheduler

This week's theme: _____

WEEKLY GOALS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

SELF-CARE BUCKETS:

This week I will take care of myself by...

Mind	Body	Heart
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THE PLAN:

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Mind							
Body							
Heart							



DAILY Self-Care Scheduler

I am grateful for...

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

TOP GOALS...

Personal

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Work

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

SELF CARE SCHEDULE:

Self Care Task	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night

- Drink your water.**
- Eat your veggies.**
- Take your prescriptions and vitamins.**
- Get some sleep.**

My mood was good when...

My mood was not great when...

Tomorrow's intentions...

Find Your **PERSONAL** Pharmacist



Find your personal pharmacist
at one of our
220 locations across Canada

The Canadian Mental Health Association is proud to partner with The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy as our exclusive Wellness Partner for Ride Don't Hide 2020.

While Ride Don't Hide riders are working hard to bring mental health into the open, Medicine Shoppe Pharmacies are here to help you better manage your health.

At The Medicine Shoppe, there's no one-size-fits-all. Your personal pharmacists approach your health management by paying close attention to your needs and providing personalized care. Discover what they can do to make your life easier!

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