



**Mount  
Sinai**

*Brain Injury  
Research Center*

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Dear BIRC Community,

With the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic evolving by the day, we must all do our part in slowing the spread of the virus within the community. The health and safety of our staff, participants, and patients is our priority and we are closely monitoring updates from the WHO, CDC and other institutions. For that reason, the Brain Injury Research Center is closed for in-person visits. However, we are all working remotely! We will be continuing our important work, enrolling new participants into our studies, and collecting data over the telephone, internet, and mail. Please feel free to reach out to us! It's a great time to contribute to brain injury research.

For those individuals receiving patient care with our Rehabilitation Neuropsychology Faculty Practice, we are transitioning your therapy to remote sessions using a video teleconferencing service. Your therapist will be in touch with you to discuss this as an option. By limiting in-person, face-to-face contact, telehealth can be a means to continue receiving therapy and cognitive rehabilitation services while also helping to slow and prevent the spread of infectious disease. If you are interested in learning about these services, please reach out to Susan Giorgi at 212-241-2221 or [susan.giorgi@mountsinai.org](mailto:susan.giorgi@mountsinai.org).

We are thankful for your patience, partnership and thoughtfulness. We are committed to making decisions that are best for our participants, patients, and community. We are here for you, and we believe the best way to get through this is together. Please stay safe and healthy, and thank you for being a valued member of our BIRC community.

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Below are several tips and resources that will provide reliable information and ideas for self care to support well-being during home isolation/quarantine:

1. Get your information from reliable sources. We suggest that you limit the time you spend researching COVID-19 if you find it makes you stressed or anxious (limit it to 1-2 times per day, rather than every hour).
    - Mount Sinai Hospital [Mount Sinai COVID-19 Resources](#)
    - Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
    - World Health Organization (WHO) [Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
    - ACL offers Updated Information on COVID-19 for People with Disabilities and Older Adults: [What Do Older Adults and People with Disabilities Need to Know About Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)?](#)
  2. Try some deep breathing and relaxation exercises. These activities can help manage stress and improve sleep.
    - [Yoga With Adriene](#) offers free yoga and meditation lessons for all levels.
    - [Calm - The #1 App for Meditation and Sleep](#) (available for download on iPhone and Android)
  3. Keep in touch with family and friends through email, phone calls and making use of social media platforms.
    - Your face-to-face interactions may be limited, but if you're feeling sad or anxious you're not alone. Your friends and family may feel the same way, and they may be very glad to hear from you. Use these conversations as an opportunity to discuss your experience and share ideas for how to spend your time.
  4. Online support groups and mental health support recommendations
    - The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers [Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease](#)
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[Outbreaks](#), an article that includes a number of recommendations for supporting those who experience mental health impacts during this outbreak. They provide support through their 24/7 crisis counseling helpline 1-800-985-5990 (English and español) or text 'TalkWithUs' to 66746.

- [Vets4Warriors](#) is a 24/7 confidential peer support network for veteran and military communities. They provide immediate, free, and long-term peer support through confidential phone, chat, text, and email conversations. Visit [www.vets4warriors.com](http://www.vets4warriors.com) or call 1-855-838-8255.
- The National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) [COVID-19 \(CORONAVIRUS\) INFORMATION AND RESOURCES](#), offers a guide on navigating the challenges that we are confronted with during this outbreak. They also provide several online and phone support services where people can exchange support and encouragement.
  - Online support communities can be joined by visiting <https://www.nami.org/>.
  - A Warmline is confidential, non-crisis emotional support telephone hotline staffed by peer volunteers who are in recovery. Visit [NAMI National HelpLine Warmline Directory](#) to find a warmline that serves your area.

Sincerely,

The Brain Injury Research Center (BIRC) of Mount Sinai

Kristen Dams-O'Connor, PhD., Director of BIRC

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