

# Staying fit during quarantine

## 10 Ways to Maintain Your Health and Spirit

By Lacy Wolff, ERS Health Promotion Administrator

The coronavirus pandemic brings a new set of demands for state workers. Maintaining relationships with family members, friends and even neighbors can require more attention as we physically distance. Errands need strategic planning. Routines must be reinvented.

If you are among the newly minted teleworkers, take some time and think about how to address your needs. Your new routine should support your own health (mental and physical), as well as productivity.

1. **Make deposits to your sleep bank.** Many people spend at least 30 to 60 minutes a day in their car commuting to and from work. Use this extra time to catch up on your sleep and you help boost your immune system. If you are struggling to go to sleep, try a breathing technique like the 4-7-8 breath: Inhale for a count of 4, hold for a count of 7, exhale for a count of 8.
2. **Create a comfortable and productive physical workspace.** Your at-home office space may not be perfect in the beginning, but you can make adjustments gradually. Even [the CEO of a billion-dollar startup](#) is working from his children's bedroom! If your home workspace is not as comfortable as your office desk, be sure to make the necessary adjustments like stretching often.
3. **Schedule time for a walk or other exercise.** Many agencies allow for 15 to 30 minute fitness breaks during the day for a reason. In addition to the health benefits, fitness breaks are also mental breaks that boost your productivity.
4. **Keep your immune system strong.** Eat fruits and vegetables – fresh, frozen or canned – when you can get them. The more colors the better! Learn about the best foods to eat to boost your immune system [through this Cleveland Clinic article](#).
5. **Plan your snacks and lunches.** Having healthy snacks and lunches ready to eat will help you feel your best. Get inspired with ERS' latest wellness webinar recording: ["How to outsmart your mind to eat better"](#) with DPS trainer Mike

Harper. You might also consider using this time to sign up for a weight management program or health coaching through your health plan.

6. **Remember to practice healthy habits.** Drink plenty of water, take your vitamins and other medications. Talk with family members or roommates so that they can support your needs and you can support theirs.
7. **Take a shower and put on clothes you would wear to work.** Get out of your yoga pants and pajamas! Dressing for work helps your mind segue into work mode. Even stepping up to business casual can make you feel different about your workday.
8. **Manage your stress with a 10 to 15 minute daily meditation or yoga break.** If you don't know how, ERS is hosting an "Intro to Mindfulness" webinar on Friday, April 10 at 10 a.m. and noon. You can register through the [ERS Wellness Events Calendar](#).
9. **Feel more secure by understanding financial basics.** Money can be a major source of stress in our lives. Create a budget to see where you are spending your money. Budgeting is empowering and gives us a sense of control in challenging times. ERS is hosting a webinar with a financial expert from the Texas Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner, Andrea Johnson at noon on April 15. (Register through the [ERS Wellness Events Calendar](#).)
10. **Have some fun and enjoy social connections through fun activities** with those in your home (even the furry ones) and friends online. Think about family dinners, games and walks in nature. Online games you can invite your friends to can be found through the [Parade website](#). Card game lovers can enjoy [playing online](#) with friends.

## Questions?

We are here to support you through these challenging times. If you have any questions regarding your wellness benefits, or any of the resources mentioned please [email](#) us.