

College students feeling the strain of coronavirus

April 6 2020



(HealthDay)—The lives of college students have been turned upside

down due to the coronavirus pandemic, so an expert offers some advice to help them cope with the situation.

Along with having to switch from in-person classes to online sessions, students have lost many other parts of their daily routine, so it's important to maintain a "foundation of coping skills" such as good sleep habits, [healthy eating](#), [self-care](#) and taking breaks from [screen time](#), said Caitlin Nevins, director of psychological services at McLean Hospital's College Mental Health Program in Belmont, Mass.

Students also need to seek mental health support if they feel they need it. Even if they can't get an in-person session, assistance may be available over the phone and through telehealth.

"Students should have a low threshold for reaching out and exploring what resources their school can offer remotely," Nevins said in a hospital news release. "Living at home may not be ideal, or even feasible, for all students. Now is an important time to access supports."

While it's important to stay informed about the [coronavirus](#) pandemic, students have to recognize when to take a break from stressful news by reading, watching a movie, or joking with friends. This will boost resiliency to the deluge of upsetting news.

Students need to monitor how the news is making them feel and how much media exposure they can handle. It might be a good idea to step back and practice extra self-care, Nevins suggested.

Many students are isolated. To stay connected with others, they can move beyond texting or [social media](#) to more interpersonal communications, such as phone or video calls with friends. Nevins suggests making plans to watch shows together remotely or participate in other digital forms of dorm activities. Get creative about maintaining

crucial social connections when it's not possible to get together in person, she said.

More information: The U.S. National Institute of Mental Health has more on [coping with coronavirus](#).

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Citation: College students feeling the strain of coronavirus (2020, April 6) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-college-students-strain-coronavirus.html>

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