

Tips for Healthier Remote Working

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle while working from home



Well, it's week 1 of working remotely! Many of us may already be anxious or concerned about this drastic shift in our daily routine. We may also wonder how we will be able to maintain our healthy habits while working from home. When our daily habits are interrupted, it's very easy to veer off-track. In addition, some of us will experience a sense of isolation being away from the office.

Fortunately, there are ways we can keep our healthy habits and positive spirit up! Here are some time-tested ways to help maintain well-being, even when the office is closed.

1. We must encourage each other and our family members to get some **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY** each day! For example, plan an early morning, lunchtime or evening walk or bike ride. We can still maintain social distancing while getting ourselves moving. Additionally, grabbing some extra Vitamin D from the sun can help boost the immune system, which is very important right now for all of us! We are so lucky in Bermuda that we can be outdoors. If it's raining, even just opening some windows, playing some music, and dancing around for 20 minutes can get the blood moving and reduce your stress. This is very important for all of us.

All BF&M health insureds have access to the LiveWell Wellness platform join.virginpulse.com/bfm. If you need some motivation...join the Bermuda Heart Foundation's 30x30 challenge which has just started! You can get your family to take the challenge – all that's involved is walking 30 minutes, 3 times per week over the next 10 weeks.

Registration for the next Challenge – Food Around the World, begins on March 30th!

On the programs page, you also have access to the Whil YOGA program where you have 12 sessions of 20 minute yoga sessions that you and your family can do...**for FREE!**

2. **HEALTHY SNACKING and EATING** - Working from home can make it easier to graze on junk food or overeat. It is best to plan your 3 meals and snacks out for the day to make it easier to stick to it, and avoid mindless eating. We can share tips and recipes for healthy snacks with each other...maybe some healthy snacks you have made with your kids! This is a perfect time to get your children involved in baking and general meal preparation. If you need some recipe suggestions, there are KURBO cookbooks on the BF&M website on the LiveWell Resources page www.bfm.bm/livewell-tools
3. Maintain a **REGULAR SLEEP SCHEDULE**. In these times it is very important to ensure that you and your family members get enough sleep to keep your immune system strong. Strive to get 7 or 8 hours of sleep a night. One of the perks of working from home can be having a slightly more flexible daily schedule, and not having to set an alarm clock! However, keeping to a regular sleep schedule will be helpful to you and your family, particularly if you have children at home too.
4. Try to find a spot that can be your **DEDICATED WORKSPACE** with a comfortable chair, adequate lighting and fewer distractions, so that you can work and those around you can respect the boundaries. It's good to keep your bedroom and workspace separate, if possible, so that your work does not interfere with your sleep. Using headphones may be helpful in reducing noise and distractions as well.

5. In these uncertain times, even family members or other employees who say they are not concerned about the coronavirus itself, may be feeling stressed and anxious. They may have a spouse or family member who has lost their job or whose income has plummeted. Encourage family members and your coworkers to **TALK ABOUT HOW THEY ARE FEELING**. It is natural to experience a wide variety of emotions (e.g. sadness, frustration, anger, anxiety) during such uncertainty. Encourage your family members and fellow employees to air their concerns as well as their suggestions. Consider setting up a chat group with your coworkers or family to encourage this.

6. Remote work can negatively impact your emotional health as you may experience a sense of isolation. This can be particularly difficult if you are an extrovert or live by yourself. Consider holding meetings via video conference instead of just by phone, and build in plenty of time at the start of the meeting for people to simply chat, check-in and **CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER**. Similarly, offer your children opportunities to have virtual play-dates and video calls with friends and family. If you are struggling with the isolation, pick up the phone and have a chat or even, for example, have a virtual dinner together with others to celebrate birthdays or other special occasions. If you are really feeling overwhelmed and need to speak to someone, consider contacting a private counselor or your Employee Assistance Program for professional help as they will likely do a video or telephone session.
Don't be afraid to SEEK THE HELP you or your family members need.

7. Above all, **BE FLEXIBLE**. Remote work is rarely without its chaotic moments, especially when there may be more than one person working at home remotely. People may experience, for example, trouble with their internet, or have children or parents who interrupt important video calls as they need care or assistance. Keeping a sense of humor and accepting that getting your work done may require more time, a different process or be split over time, will go a long way to reducing the stress and pressure on yourself and your family.