

We Can Do This!

Coping with COVID, Issue 3

Resources compiled by Extension Lincoln County

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Quick Guide to information you can use!

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Look for “Mindful Minutes” throughout the flyer! These little meditations will help you calm your mind and help you better deal with the stress of the moment.

For more on living a healthier, more mindful life, visit Extension’s Health and Well-Being site:

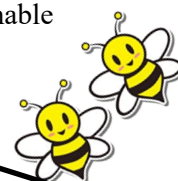
extension.wisc.edu/health

Mindful Minute

“Quaranteam”? “Double bubble”? These terms are showing up more and more in the media as individuals and families make decisions about when they will start to see other people again. In other families, questions are bubbling up about when and how it will be safe to get much needed support, like childcare or respite care.

The decision to see others or engage in activities is very personal. To help individuals and families think through these choices, Extension's Life Span Program has developed a decision guide. The guide (fyi.extension.wisc.edu/aging/article-topic/covid-19) walks users through the decision-making process, helping you to weigh out your own risks and benefits of interacting with others in your home or in public spaces. Those who prefer a more interactive tool can download a worksheet and/or flowchart that will take you through a series of questions and considerations.

We have included a portion of the decision guide in this newsletter. If you are unable to access the materials through the website above and /or would like a printed copy of the entire guide, worksheet and/or flowchart, contact the Extension office at 715-539-1072. We will be happy to mail you a copy.



Moving Forward during COVID-19: Deciding who, when, & how

The COVID-19 pandemic led to months of “Stay at Home” orders across the country. People were encouraged to stay at home to avoid the spread of the virus. Businesses and workplaces, places of worship, schools, and daycares were closed. Now that these locations are slowly opening back up, it may be time to decide how or when to return to these places or who to start engaging with in-person. This guide will walk you through the decision-making process. It will help you weigh out your own risks and benefits of interacting with others in public spaces or in your homes again.

Before you start, consider: What interaction are you thinking about, and who is involved? Examples might include deciding when to see family, visit grandparents, send your children back to daycare, set up respite care or in-home help, or go to a barbeque or other event.

To make the best, most informed decision, carefully read through the following pages. Each section focus on a specific aspect of the situation and has additional information and guidance to help you navigate this complex situation.

Cope with Changes by Taking Care of YOU

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with the changes you’re experiencing.

Here are some things you can do to help yourself during these uncertain times:

- * Eat foods that are good for you.
- * Get a good night’s sleep; limit screen time before bed.
- * Get some exercise daily—Even a 5 or 10 minute walk.
- * Reach out to family and friends through calls, texts or video chats.
- * Set boundaries to not let the pandemic take over everything you watch, talk about or read. Ask friends and family to talk about something else if needed.
- * Find positive ways to manage your emotions such as reading, music, breathing, stretching and relaxation.
- * Avoid self-medicating with alcohol, drugs or other risky behaviors.
- * Monitor changes of any preexisting mental health conditions you have.
- * Check in with yourself daily and ask for help if you need

More resources and ideas can be found at resilient.wisconsin.gov.

CONSIDER— Local Context

What is the local trend in cases and deaths from COVID-19?

- Check with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to understand the COVID-19 activity level in your area¹. Are cases increasing, decreasing, or holding steady? Is the activity low, moderate, or high?
- Your local health department will also have useful information to help you understand local trends and issues².
- Other useful information includes:
 - * The percentage of positive COVID-19 tests in your county. Lower numbers (<5%) show that there is enough testing to get the virus transmission under control, and you are less likely to cross paths with the virus.
 - * The doubling rate of infections (that is, how long it takes for the number of cases of COVID-19 to double). This information tells you how fast the virus is spreading. Higher numbers mean the virus is spreading more slowly and transmission is under control.
 - * You may be able to find this information from your county health department, or from one of the data resources listed below.
- Have there been recent outbreaks or surges? An outbreak is a sudden increase in the occurrence of a disease at a particular time and place. For example, several long-term care facilities and prisons have seen an increased rate of positive cases of COVID-19 due to the number of people in close proximity to one another. You might find out about outbreaks from the news or from the county health website. Remember to think about outbreaks in the communities of all the households involved, if you don't all live in the same area.
- Have there been recent local events that may lead to a surge, such as large gatherings or events? We are learning that many new cases of COVID-19 are arising when a very infectious person (typically unaware that they are contagious) has attended a large gathering, leading to a localized outbreak. Remember to think about events in the communities of all the households involved, if you don't all live in the same area.
- What is the local healthcare system like? Healthcare in rural areas can often handle fewer cases than in urban settings, so it is important to know what your closest clinics and hospitals can handle and whether they are currently dealing with a lot of cases or very few.



¹<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>
²<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/county.htm>

CONSIDER — Possible Risks

- How many other households are involved, and how much do you know about their day-to-day activities and possible risks? It might be helpful to talk about the questions below with the other individuals or families involved so that you are all on the same page.
- What is the personal risk for the people involved, whether you are the host, the guest, or a participant?³ People who are older or have chronic health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease, or who have poor immune systems or take medications that affect their immune system, are at higher risk of complications and poor outcomes if they get COVID-19.
- Does your family have a plan to take if someone gets sick? For example, the CDC recommends that someone with symptoms of COVID-19 use a separate bedroom and bathroom to prevent spreading the illness to other family members.⁴ For family caregivers, the Greater Wisconsin Agency for Aging Resources (GWAAR) has step-by-step advice [PDF] for developing a plan for if a caregiver gets sick.⁵
- What are the chances that someone involved (you and/or the person or family you are hoping to see) has been exposed to the virus? Assessing the distance, time, activity, and environment, frequency of outings, and adherence to safety precautions like mask wearing can help you think about the risk.⁶
 - * Short, infrequent outings like grocery shopping carry relatively low risk, while essential workers such as medical professionals may have much higher risk of being exposed. Safety precautions such as wearing a mask or other face covering, keeping a physical distance from others, washing hands often, and staying outdoors also play a role in reducing the risk of spread.
 - * People who live or work in congregate settings (where a number of people meet or gather and share the same space for a period of time) such as a child care center or residential care facility, or who live in a high-density neighborhood may have more risk in their day-to-day exposures.
- What is the worst-case scenario if someone gets sick? Think about consequences to your own family, as well as the possible effects for others with whom you have contact.
- Overall, keeping your number of contacts low is an important way to minimize your risk.

³<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>

⁴<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

⁵<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2005962>

⁶<https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2020/5/22/21265180/cdc-coronavirus-surfaces-social-distancing-guidelines-covid-19-risks>

CONSIDER — Possible Benefits

- What are the possible benefits of the interaction? How would it meet physical, emotional, mental, social, or spiritual needs? We all need social connection, and we also need a break from our responsibilities (such as caregiving and household management) and time to ourselves. How would the interaction you are considering reduce stress and help you regain some balance in your life?
- What are the short and long-term consequences of NOT meeting those physical, emotional, mental, or social needs? Grief, loneliness, despair, and burnout can result from ignoring our personal and self-care needs. These feelings should not be ignored.
- Is it possible to meet these needs in other ways? Phone and video options are now available for many activities, including faith services and even virtual respite care for family caregivers.
- How long is the current situation sustainable without a change? What was workable for 1-2 months might not be sustainable for longer periods of time as we face the possibility of ongoing waves of outbreaks. What arrangement would balance your family's safety and well-being in a way that is possible over a longer period?

CONSIDER — Timing and Context

- Are there any upcoming events that would increase or decrease risks in a significant way? Consider things like children going back to school, necessary work trips, or other changes to the number or type of contacts your family typically has.
- How can you make the interaction as safe as possible? Staying outdoors, wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and maintaining physical distance (staying 6+ feet apart) can all help reduce transmission risks. Consider virtual options if it is not possible to take safety precautions. For family caregivers, virtual respite is becoming an option in many communities.

NEXT STEPS

- Talk with your family or those you want to interact with about their own thoughts on the questions above, and how you can all feel most comfortable moving forward. It's important for everyone to be on the same page about how you will interact and what steps you will take to protect each other.
- If you still feel conflicted, try breaking the decision down to two options. For example, should we see family this weekend, or not see them at all until next year? Then pick new options that are less extreme and try again. This exercise might help clarify what feels right for your family.
- If you don't feel like the risks are worth it, it's OK to say no to an invitation or wait to change your routine. It's also OK to make a decision and change your mind later. Continue to track the local situation, your own needs, and the needs of others around you to decide when and how to move forward.

Ultimately, the decision of whether and how to move forward is very personal. Staying outside, wearing masks, practicing physical distancing (staying about 6 feet apart), and washing hands well and frequently can all help support safe social engagement.

The best advice is to come to a decision you all feel comfortable with and enjoy every minute of it.

This guide can be found online at fyi.extension.wisc.edu/aging/article-topic/covid-19. If you are unable to access the materials through the website above and /or would like a printed copy of the entire guide, worksheet and/or flowchart, contact the Extension office at [715-539-1072](tel:715-539-1072). We will be happy to mail you a copy.

Mindful Minute

Gratitude Breath

A gratitude breath is a mindful exercise to recenter and refocus on what we are grateful for in our life. To practice a gratitude breath do the following: Sitting in a chair with your feet on the ground, align your spine and roll your shoulders back. Open up your chest and take a deep breath in through your nose. If it feels safe, gently close your eyes or soften your eyelids. Extend your arms to the sides and reach up to the ceiling on an inhale and slowly release your arms down to your sides on the exhale.

Now incorporate thoughts of gratitude with each movement. It could be any person, place or thing that you are grateful for in your life. Take a deep breath in and raise your arms up to the ceiling as you think of one thing you are grateful for and as you exhale lower your arms to your sides and hold that feeling of gratitude in your heart. Try repeating this two more times. When you've finished let your breath return naturally, gently wiggling your toes and fingers, rolling your shoulders back and gently opening your eyes.

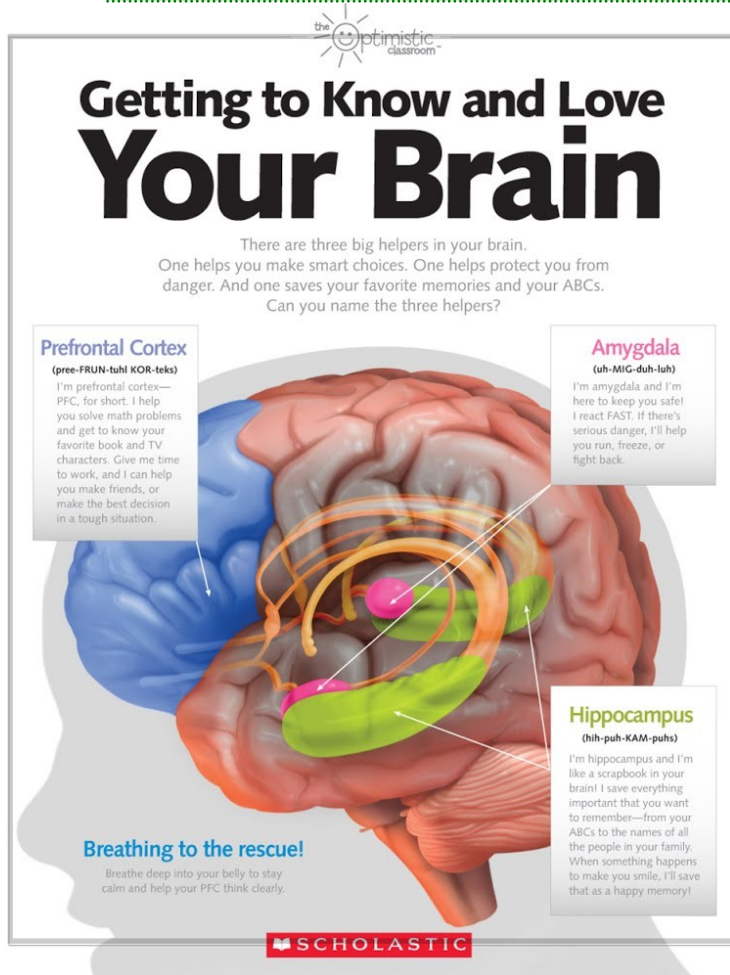
Your Brain: Wise Leader, Security Guard and Saver of Memories

Our brain is an important part of our body. There are three parts of our brain that help us think and react to everything around us. The prefrontal cortex which we can think of as the “wise leader” helps us make good choices and pay attention. Our “security guard”, the amygdala, warns us when we are in danger, keeps us safe, and helps us express emotions. While the hippocampus, which we can think of as the “saver of memories”, keeps important information and brings it back when we need it. The picture shows where these three parts are located in your brain.

When we feel frightened or upset, our “security guard” (amygdala) goes on high alert. During this time, our “security guard” blocks information from going to our “wise leader” (prefrontal cortex), so we can react in a flash without the opportunity to think through this reaction. When you feel safe and happy, the “security guard” (amygdala) will pass information on to the “wise leader” (prefrontal cortex) so you can think. The “saver of memories” (hippocampus) will also create, store, and process all the important facts and memories the “wise leader” (prefrontal cortex) passes on to it so you can choose how you respond with all of this information.

Anytime you feel frightened or upset, breathing can come to your rescue to calm your “security guard” (amygdala) so your “wise leader” (prefrontal cortex) and “saver of memories” (hippocampus) can help you pay attention and respond with good choices. These four steps can help us remember this: Stop, Take a Few Deep Breaths, Be Calm, and Choose Your Response.

Source: *The MindUp Curriculum, Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning and Living, Scholastic*



Be kind to everyone
in your life....



including yourself!



**LINCOLN COUNTY
RESOURCES**



With the uncertainty and changes surrounding the COVID pandemic, this is a challenging time for everyone.

We all need help, whether it is finding childcare, resources to keep our business afloat, help with food and financial issues, or looking for ideas on how to stay active, connected and in control of our lives. The Lincoln County Social Needs list provides easy access to a wide variety of resources to help us all cope with these uncertain times.

bit.ly/LincolnCountyResources

You can call 211 for information and referrals on resources available in your area. 211 is available by phone 24/7.

More resources and information can also be found on the Extension Lincoln County COVID page (bit.ly/ExtLinCOVID)

**You don't have to go it alone,
there is help!**



Social Needs resources list was compiled by Lincoln County Social Needs Committee.

Together, we can do this!

Have you responded to the Census?

Every 10 years the United States Constitution requires Congress to count every person living in the country. During writing of the Constitution, I am sure that our forefathers did not envision the large Country and government we have now, but they understood that an accurate count of residents of the United States was essential to ensure that the House of Representatives accurately reflected the population of each State.

Responding to the Census is not only your civic duty, your response is required by law! Unfortunately, response in many Lincoln County jurisdictions has fallen short. In several towns less than one-third of households have responded to the Census.

In order for Lincoln County residents to get their fair share of the \$1.5 trillion distributed based on the results of the census, we need to make sure that everyone in the County is included in the 2020 Census!

When people aren't counted, our community can lose out on federal funding for critical public services like schools and education programs, hospitals and health insurance, transportation funding for public transportation and roads and bridges, and emergency response. Responses to the 2020 Census also determine how many seats a state may gain or lose in the U.S. House of Representatives.



If you have not, please complete your census form today. If you have misplaced the paper form, please visit mycensus.gov or call [844-330-2020](tel:844-330-2020) (there is support for response in over 10 different languages).

If you choose to not self-respond, census enumerators will begin canvassing residences August 11th, to prevent this visit, please consider responding to the 2020 Census today. By law, your response is 100% confidential for 72 years.

If you have any questions, you can reach Melinda Osterberg, Lincoln County Community Development Educator at [715-252-9459](tel:715-252-9459) or at Melinda.osterberg@wisc.edu.

Local COVID-19 Testing Sites

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms contact your healthcare provider. If you do not have a primary health care provider, contact one of the hotlines listed below. **All testing sites require prescreening and appointment.**

Ascension

COVID-19 Hotline: [1-833-981-0711](tel:1-833-981-0711) Available 24/7

To make an appointment to be tested, call the Ascension COVID-19 Hotline if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Prescreening is required by Ascension medical staff by appointment office visit, Ascension online care, or phone.

Drive Through:

Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital (Tomahawk)
Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 9 am - Noon

Non Drive Through:

Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital Emergency
Department (Merrill) Available 24/7

Marshfield Clinic

COVID-19 Helpline: [1-877-998-0880](tel:1-877-998-0880) Available 24/7

To make an appointment to be tested, call if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Marshfield Clinic medical staff will complete a prescreening evaluation and schedule an appointment for you.

Drive Through:

Marshfield Clinic (Merrill Center)
Monday - Friday, 8 am - 6 pm

Attention: This list is limited and does not include all testing sites that are available; please consult with your health care provider for additional testing information. Days and hours are subject to change.

Aspirus

COVID-19 Hotline: [1-844-568-0701](tel:1-844-568-0701)

Available: Monday - Friday 7 am - 7 pm
Saturday - Sunday 8 am - 5 pm

To make an appointment to be tested, call the Aspirus COVID-19 Hotline if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and would like to be tested. Aspirus medical staff will complete a prescreening evaluation and determine if testing can be completed at a drive through site or if you should be seen in person for further evaluation.

Drive Through:

Aspirus (Weston)
Monday - Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm,
Saturday - Sunday 9 am - 4 pm
Aspirus (Rhinelander)
Monday - Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm,
Saturday - Sunday 9 am - 4 pm

Non Drive Through:

Aspirus Clinic (Merrill)
Monday - Friday, 8 am - 5 pm

Other

Lincoln County Veterans Services has information on COVID-19 testing for veterans and other resources.
<https://bit.ly/2YnYLid>

WI Department of Health Services has a list of free community testing events in the state.
<https://bit.ly/3f8xA1R>

Help, I turned my blues into greens, now how do I harvest them?!

If some of you are like me, you may be looking into harvesting your vegetables in the near future. When harvesting vegetables it is important to harvest as close to eating, preparing, or processing as possible. Harvest leafy vegetables and herbs in the early in the morning while there is still dew on them. This will aid in having the highest quality product. Below is some advice on harvesting some common vegetables.

Even though tomatoes will ripen indoors when some red color is showing, it is best to let the tomatoes ripen to full color on the vine. This is especially important to get full flavor and maximum sugar content when using tomatoes for juice or canning.

Harvest peppers when fruits, good size and appropriate color. We usually harvest bell peppers when they are green. However, many varieties will change to red if there is enough growing season left.

Beans, such as green or wax, can be harvested when pods are still tender and before the seeds begin to bulge.

Cucumbers can be harvested when the fruits reach 1 ½ to 2 ½ inches long for sweet pickles. If you want dill pickles harvest when the fruit is 3 to 4 inches long. If you have slicing cucumbers wait until the fruit is 6 to 9 inches long and are still bright green and firm. Cucumbers become dull in color and lose their crisp. If you have burpless cucumbers, harvest when these are 10 to 12 inches long.

When looking at harvesting pumpkins, make sure the rind is firm and glossy and the part of the fruit touching the soil has a cream to orange color.

For more information on harvesting vegetables check out the Extension publication "Harvesting Vegetables from the Home Garden" located at: <https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0145/8808/4272/files/A2727.pdf> or contact Dan Marzu, Agriculture Educator, at dan.marzu@wisc.edu or 715-539-1072.



Food Preservation Information

Did You Know?



The dial gauge on your pressure canner needs to be tested every year.

Get yours tested today!

You can get it tested, free of charge, at Extension Lincoln County. We use the tester provided by Presto and it is the best way to ensure the accuracy and safety of your dial gauge pressure canner.

Just bring in your dial gauge pressure canner and will get you ready for canning!

We're Here to Help!

Extension Lincoln County is here to help you with all your food preservation questions.

Extension Lincoln County
801 N. Sales Street, Suite 101
Merrill WI, 52253
(715) 539-1072



Watch & Learn

Whether you are new to home food preservation or are just looking for a refresher on the best practices, the University of Minnesota Extension has short, informational YouTube videos that provide a hands-on look at food preservation methods and food safety.

Find them at: bit.ly/PreservationBasics

Recipes and More!

The University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension has many booklets and bulletins that explain how to preserve food safely! If you are interested in canning, freezing, drying, making jams or jellies or even pickling and fermenting, we have a resource just for you! You can find them at:

fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safefood/recipes

Build a better snack with healthy foods

 Foodwise, University of Wisconsin-Extension

 @foodwise_uwex

 @foodwise_uwex

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/foodwise>

Snacks can help you meet your daily nutrient needs. They can keep your energy high throughout the day. Try a snack from each of the food groups!

Fruits and Vegetables:

Has vitamins and minerals your body needs.

- + Peaches
- + Pineapple
- + Strawberries
- + Raisins
- + Mandarin oranges
- + Clementines
- + Dried fruit
- + Broccoli
- + Bell peppers
- + Snap peas
- + Cherry tomatoes
- + Celery
- + Carrots
- + Kale



Protein:

Keeps your muscles strong.

- + Peanuts and peanut butter
- + Lean white meats such as turkey or chicken
- + Sunflower seeds
- + Pumpkin seeds
- + Hard boiled eggs
- + Hummus



Whole Grains:

Gives you energy. Helps with digestion.

- + Whole wheat crackers
- + Low-sugar cereal
- + Popcorn
- + Whole wheat or corn tortillas
- + Oatmeal



Low-fat dairy

Keeps your bones strong.

- + Cottage cheese
- + Yogurt
- + Cheese
- + Milk



Combine two or more food groups!

- + Cottage cheese with peaches or pineapple
- + Celery with peanut butter and raisins
- + Broccoli, carrots, or snap peas with hummus
- + Layer sliced bell pepper with lean sliced meat and low-fat cheese
- + Yogurt mixed with fruit, nuts, seeds and cereal or granola
- + Quesadillas
- + Cereal with milk and fruit



FoodWise education is funded by the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program - EFNEP. SNAP/FoodShare helps families buy the food they need for good health. Visit access.wi.gov to learn how to apply.

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FOOD WISE
Healthy choices, healthy lives.

UW-MADISON EXTENSION



Mindful Minute

Mindful Movement

Unlike exercise where the main objective is to get in better physical shape, the main objective of mindful movement is to notice the sensations of the body in motion. Active mindfulness practice brings the mind and body in union which regulates the nervous system.

Our shoulders are a place where we often hold lots of stress so start with simple shoulder lifts. As you inhale lift your shoulders up toward your ears, as you exhale drop your shoulders down as low as you can. (Repeat this a couple more times.)

Next, try a gentle neck stretch another place we often hold stress. As you inhale, lift your chin up toward the ceiling, exhaling slowly drop your chin toward your chest. (Repeat this a couple more times.) Next, exhale as you slowly drop your right ear to your right shoulder. Inhale slowly lifting your head back to neutral. Exhale again slowly dropping your left ear to your left shoulder. Slowly inhale returning your head back to neutral. (Repeat a couple more times.) You should feel a gentle stretching of your neck as you complete this movement.

Do you feel any different? Sometimes when we get stressed, we can check in with our bodies by doing some simple mindful movement. Mindful movement can be done sitting or standing so they are adaptable for everyone!

Disaster Distress Helpline

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

The Disaster Distress Helpline, **1-800-985-5990**, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories. Stress, anxiety, and other depression-like symptoms are common reactions after a disaster. Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs to 66746** to connect with a trained crisis counselor.



Mindful Minute

A few more mindful movements to try...

Lifting Arms – Take a deep breath in, and stretch your arms out to the side and then up over your head. Imagine that you're making the biggest circle around you that you can. Breathing out slowly, reverse that motion, bringing your arms back down stretching them out and slowly bringing them back down by your sides. Repeat this a few times.

Spreading our Wings – Raise your arms to shoulder height in front of you with palms spread wide and facing toward each other. As you inhale, open your arms up as wide as possible, and pulling your shoulder blades toward each other. Exhale while bringing your palms toward each other again in front of your body. Repeat a couple of times letting your arms gently return back down to your sides when you have completed.

Think about how you feel after doing these movements? Do you feel different after doing these movements than you did before? How do you think mindful movement could be helpful in managing stress?

Not only can these movements help us manage stress, stretching through mindful movement can also help to increase muscular strength and flexibility in our body. All things that are good for our overall health and wellbeing.

**This is a stressful time for everyone,
there is help for all who need it!**

211 is an information and referral program that can provide information about COVID-19 and resources that may be available in your area. 211 is available by phone 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

- Dial 211 or **1-800-922-5590**
- Text 898-211 to communicate with a call specialist Monday-Friday 8 am-4 pm
- Text 211-211 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to have general COVID-19 info texted to you

Call volumes are high, please be patient and try to use the text or online options first.

For more information

Find local COVID resources at
bit.ly/ExtLinCOVID

Find state COVID resources at
fyi.extension.wisc.edu/covid19

Like the Extension Lincoln County Facebook page
bit.ly/ExtLinFB

Be aware that criminals are attempting to exploit COVID-19 worldwide through a variety of scams. There have been reports of:

- Individuals and businesses selling fake cures for COVID-19 online and engaging in other forms of fraud.
- Phishing emails from entities posing as the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Malicious websites and apps that appear to share virus-related information to gain and lock access to your devices until payment is received.
- Seeking donations fraudulently for illegitimate or non-existent charitable organizations.

Criminals will likely continue to use new methods to exploit COVID-19 worldwide.

If you think you are a victim of a scam or attempted fraud involving COVID-19, you can report it without leaving your home through a number of platforms. Go to:

- Contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at **866-720-5721** or via email at disaster@leo.gov
- If it's a cyber scam, submit your complaint through <https://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx>