

YOUR  
SAFETY  
MATTERS

# COVID -19

## Special Edition

## YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Below are some tips to help those experiencing heightened mental health concerns to remain calm and balanced as this public health situation unfolds.

1. Considering the level of attention and seriousness being paid to the COVID-19 pandemic, it's normal to feel anxious. Try not to avoid, ignore or suppress anxious thoughts. Instead, be aware of your anxiety and accept that you're feeling anxious in this situation. Try to keep things in perspective; notice and challenge your thoughts that may be extreme or unhelpful.
2. Self-care is critically important at this time, as worries can be made worse if we aren't taking care of ourselves. Lean on social supports, try to get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise and engage in enjoyable activities. Do the things you would typically do to support your health.
3. Seek information from reliable news sources only. The London Middlesex Health Unit, the Province of Ontario, and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) are good sources for reliable information.
4. Take the recommended precautions as outlined by Health Canada and other credible health agencies. Remain focused on the factors within your control, such as washing hands, covering your mouth during coughs and sneezes, avoiding non-essential travel, etc.
5. If you're noticing that your symptoms of anxiety (in association with COVID-19 or otherwise) are causing you significant distress or are interfering with your ability to function normally, reach out for formal mental health support from the City of London's Employee Assistance Provider or CMHA Middlesex.

Our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available free of charge, 7 days a week, 24-hours a day to provide support to you or any immediate family members.

To book an appointment or to help determine what services or options are best suited to your needs, call toll-free 1-800-387-4765. For online services, including e-counselling, visit:

[www.shepell.com/en-ca](http://www.shepell.com/en-ca).



## NOTICE

from your Learning and  
Development Team.

**Please note that ALL  
iLearn training  
sessions are currently  
postponed until  
further notice.**



# YOUR WORK ROUTINE HEALTH



## Working From Home or at an Alternate Work Location

All work locations should meet the same health and safety standards as those in the workplace. With this in mind please consider the following when working from home or an alternate location.

### Work Day Ritual

It is still important to keep to a 'work day ritual'. Some tips for working at home include:

- Have a specific location where you work. This may be a room, or just a corner of a room, but it is always the place where you do your work.
- Begin and finish at the same time every day you are working at home. Have a beginning and end of day ritual. Since there is no longer a 'break' between waking up and going to work, some may find it helpful to actually leave the house and walk around the block before starting work. You may want to end the day the same way.
- As you would when working in the office, set a schedule and stick to it. Make a 'to do' list and check your accomplishments at the end of the day. Stick to deadlines.
- Maintain contact with the office. Establish a routine for contact with your supervisor, or co-workers. Keep your supervisor informed of your progress and any difficulties encountered.
- Determine what interruptions are okay and what is not. Tell your friends and family what the ground rules are.

### Work Load, Scheduling and Breaks

Duties, expectations, and deadlines should be clearly outlined and understood. If you are

unsure, make sure you ask.

Be careful not to "over work". There are natural breaks in an office environment that will not occur at home. Discussions with co-workers or a quick walk to the printer offer opportunities for a change in body position that may be missing in a home office.

Extended hours in the same body position or repeated motions can lead to various musculoskeletal injuries.

**TAKE FREQUENT BREAKS:** Do not sit for long periods of time. Stand up, stretch, and move. Your body is designed to move, not to remain in a static posture for long periods of time.

## CONNECT WITH US

**If you have any questions regarding your benefits, health and safety or other employment related matters during this challenging time, please do not hesitate to reach out to our HR team. Our team is ready to assist and answer any questions. You can email**

**[HRinquiry@london.ca](mailto:HRinquiry@london.ca)**

# YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH

## Working From Home Ergonomics

Where possible use a desk or dining table as your workspace to allow you to sit up straight and work at an appropriate height.

Apply the same ergonomic principles you would use at work at home:

- Sit in a chair with good back and lumbar support.
- Keep your feet flat on the floor or slightly elevated on a footrest.
- Your keyboard and mouse should be at the same working height – elbows bent at 90 degrees or slightly greater when shoulders are relaxed and wrists should be straight.
- Monitors should be approximately one arm's length away and the top of the monitor at seated eye level.
- If using a laptop:
  - Elevate the laptop so the top of the screen is at seated eye level.
  - Use a chair that supports a comfortable upright or slightly reclined position.
  - Position your laptop for the most neutral wrist posture you can achieve. If you have a large binder handy, place the wider edge at your knees so it creates an angle that keeps your wrist straight and maximizes the height of the screen.
  - Angle the laptop screen back so you can see it with the least amount of neck deviation as possible.



- Keep paperwork and any other items you will need within an arm's reach.
- When you're on the phone avoid cradling the headset between your ear and your shoulder. Rather, use the speakerphone option on your phone if you need your hands free, being mindful of confidentiality.
- To reduce eye strain, every 20 minutes, look at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Practice other good ergonomic habits and change your position throughout the day - stand up and work at your kitchen counter while you are on the phone or completing paperwork.
  - Whichever space you use at home, ensure that you maintain a good posture: sit or stand up straight, keep your shoulders back and relaxed, elbows at 90 degrees or slightly greater and keep your wrists straight.
- Keep elbows at an angle between 90° and 120°.
- Keep the wrists straight and aligned with the forearms.
- Place the working object so that it can be seen at viewing angle of 10° to 30° below the line of sight.
- Make sure lighting is properly arranged: there should not be reflections on or glare from the computer monitor.

# SOCIAL DISTANCING

Together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19 by making a conscious effort to keep a physical distance between each other.

Social distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak.

This means making changes in your everyday routines to minimize close contact with others, including:

- Where possible, work from home
- Conduct meetings online
- Avoid non-essential trips in the community
- Avoid crowded places and non-essential gatherings
- Avoid common greetings, such as handshakes
- Limit contact with people at higher risk like older adults and those in poor health
- Keep a distance of at least 2 arms-length (approximately 2 metres) from others



During this time of social distancing it is important to maintain a sense of connection as well as a feeling of community. Thanks to modern communications we have many ways to stay socially and emotionally connected to those around us. Call, Text, Skype, or Facetime daily!

## HYGIENE

Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food
  - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- When coughing or sneezing:
  - Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean the following high-touch surfaces frequently with regular household cleaners or diluted bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water):

- ▶ Toys
- ▶ Toilets
- ▶ Phones
- ▶ Electronics
- ▶ Door handles
- ▶ Bedside tables
- ▶ TV Remotes

**YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM**

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

GARY BRIDGE	gbridge@london.ca
KAREN CHRISTOPHER	kchristo@london.ca
CHRIS GOODALL	cgoodall@london.ca
LAUREN PEARCE	lpearce@london.ca
NOLAN VANDENHEEDE	nvandenh@london.ca