

HOME, FITNESS, AND IMMUNE BOOSTERS



TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

During government restrictions many of us have had to adjust to new ways of living and working including working more from home.

There are many benefits working more from home, but for some, feeling more stress, boredom, anxiety, and uncertainty is also normal.

We have noted below some tips and ideas that may help you, to feel more productive and help support your mental health.

1. SET AND STICK TO A ROUTINE

Without regular schedules, the lines between work and personal time can get blurred and be stressful to get right. Follow your normal sleep, work, and me time patterns if you can and stay consistent.

2. MAKE A DEDICATED WORKSPACE

If you can, find a quiet space away from people and distractions like the TV (or the kitchen, when you feel snacky). Get everything you need in one place, before you start work – chargers, pens, paper, and anything else – and shut the door if you can. Even in a small or shared space, try to designate an area as your dedicated workspace.

3. GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK

Working at home can make us feel like we must be available all the time. But just being "present" is no use to anyone if your mental health is suffering. Making time for breaks is important to help manage feelings of stress – try to take lunch and regular screen breaks. Give yourself time to concentrate on something else so you feel more focused when you return. Even just 5 to 10 minutes of short breaks each hour can really help your productivity too.

4. STAY CONNECTED

While working from home has its benefits, you may also feel more isolated. But there are lots of ways to stay in touch with those who matter – boosting their mental wellbeing as well as our own.

In and out of work, human interaction matters, so schedule video calls and pick up the phone instead of emailing. If you're struggling with working at home,

speaking to your colleagues or manager about your concerns.

5. SET BOUNDARIES

Setting boundaries with other members of your household is key to mental wellbeing while working at home.

You can be more flexible when working from home, so enjoy it. But it can also be difficult if there are other distractions to deal with, like children at home, who may think you are on holiday and want to spend time with you.

6. THINK LONGER TERM

You may be continuing to work from home for a while, so think about ways you could improve how you work while at home. Try to explore how you work with others. Are there different ways to talk online or new software you could use?

7. BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Remember, this is an unusual situation and things will not feel normal! Be kind to yourself and acknowledge that you might not be as productive as you usually would be. Be realistic about what you can achieve given the circumstances, and relax when your work is done.

8. REGULAR EXERCISE

Physical activity has a huge potential to enhance our mental wellbeing. Even a short burst of 10 minutes' brisk walking increases our mental alertness, energy, and positive mood. Participation in regular physical activity can increase our self-esteem and can reduce stress and anxiety.

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HOW TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

Key to beating any infection is having an optimally functioning immune system. Here are some useful tips for boosting your immune system.

- **KEEP YOUR STRESS LEVELS DOWN.**

Stress has an impact as the stress hormone cortisol turns off cells that are important in the functioning of your immune system. Try to minimize stress as best you can. We recommend engaging in activities that you find relaxing. Try some new ideas to relax, for example meditation, or maybe reading more.

- **EXERCISE.**

Low- and moderate-intensity exercise naturally lowers cortisol levels and helps with immune-system function. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of exercise a day which can include activity as simple as walking. It is, however, important not to go overboard as whilst exercise helps boost the immune system, you can over exercise which may weaken your immune system.

- **GET ADEQUATE SLEEP.**

Quality sleep is vital which for adults means getting seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Children should get more, depending on their age.

- **EAT PLENTY OF PLAIN YOGURT EVERY DAY.**

It's really an easy way to boost your probiotics and help support your microbiome. It helps to support the good bacteria that live in your body, which help to fight the bad bacteria or viruses. Other foods that can help support the microbiome include garlic, onion, ginger, sauerkraut, and fermented foods.

- **WATCH YOUR DIET.**

Stick to a balanced diet filled with lots of colourful fruits and vegetables to ensure you're getting enough zinc and vitamin D and other important vitamins and minerals. You should be able to get enough of the key vitamins and minerals through your diet but because vitamin D deficiency is relatively common, experts do recommend supplementation. We recommend eating lots of dark green, leafy vegetables and berries, as

well as nuts and seeds, and to minimize foods with sugar and trans fats, which aren't as nutrient-dense. In addition, drink lots of water and reduce alcohol consumption, which can disrupt your sleep.

- **STOP SMOKING OR VAPING.**

Smokers and those with respiratory disease have a higher rate of serious illness and complications from respiratory infections. Anything that is challenging to your lungs is going to work in the wrong direction.

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WHICH FOODS BOOST THE IMMUNE SYSTEM?

A balanced diet plays a vital role in staying well. The following foods may help to boost the immune system:

1. BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries contain a type of flavonoid called anthocyanin, which has antioxidant properties.

2. DARK CHOCOLATE

Dark chocolate contains an antioxidant called theobromine, which may help to boost the immune system by protecting the body's cells from free radicals.

3. TURMERIC

Turmeric is a yellow spice that many people use in cooking and recommended in many alternative medicines. A key ingredient is curcumin.

4. OILY FISH

Salmon, tuna, pilchards, and other oily fish are a rich source of omega-3 fatty acids.

5. BROCCOLI

Broccoli is a source of Vitamin C. It also contains potent antioxidants, such as sulforaphane. A great vegetable to eat regularly.

6. SWEET POTATOES

Sweet potatoes are rich in beta carotene, a type of antioxidant that gives the skin of the potatoes its orange colour. Beta carotene is a source of vitamin A. It helps make skin healthy and may even provide some protection against skin damage from ultraviolet (UV) rays.

7. SPINACH

Spinach will help support the immune system, as it contains many essential nutrients and antioxidants, including: flavonoids, carotenoids, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Vitamins C and E.

8. GINGER

Ginger can be used in a variety of dishes and desserts, as well as in teas. Ginger has anti-inflammatory and antioxidative properties.

9. GARLIC

Garlic is an excellent source of vitamin B6 (pyridoxine). It is also a very good source of manganese, selenium, and vitamin C. In addition to this, garlic is a good source of other minerals, including phosphorous, calcium, potassium, iron, and copper. Many of the perceived therapeutic effects of garlic are thought to be due to its active ingredient allicin. This sulphur-containing compound gives garlic its distinctive pungent smell and taste.

10. GREEN TEA

Green tea contains only a small amount of caffeine, so people can enjoy it as an alternative to black tea or coffee. As with blueberries, green tea contains flavonoids.

11. KEFIR

Kefir is a fermented drink that contains live cultures of bacteria that are beneficial for health. Various studies have shown that regular consumption of kefir can help with good bacteria, reducing inflammation, increasing antioxidant activity.

12. SUNFLOWER SEEDS

Sunflower seeds can make a tasty addition to salads or breakfast bowls. They are a rich source of Vitamin E, an antioxidant. In the same way as other antioxidants, Vitamin E improves immune function by fighting free radicals, which can damage cells.

13. ALMONDS

Almonds are another excellent source of Vitamin E. They also contain manganese, magnesium, and fibre.

14. ORANGES / KIWIFRUIT

Oranges and kiwis are an excellent source of Vitamin C.

15. RED BELL PEPPER

For people trying to avoid the sugar in fruit, red bell peppers are an excellent alternative source of Vitamin C. Stir-frying and roasting both preserve the nutrient content of red bell peppers, better than steaming or boiling.

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HOME WORKOUTS

Below are some different workout ideas to try at home.

- **LISS TRAINING**

LISS" is an acronym for "Low-Intensity Steady-State". Walking at a comfortable pace is one of the most popular forms of cardio and is a great example of LISS exercise. Aim for steady but moderate pace for 30 to 45 minutes. LISS is great for increased energy, better blood flow, a stronger heart, overall cardiovascular health.

- **MISS TRAINING**

Moderate Intensity Steady State includes any activity that results in your heart staying in the 'cardio zone'. Examples are jogging and fast walking. This level of cardio can benefit sports athletes, individuals looking for fat loss, those interested in changing body composition and of course those wanting to train at a new level of intensity.

- **INTERVAL TRAINING**

Interval training consists of set periods of high and low intensity activity. Interval training is great at burning calories. Studies show it can be at least as effective as moderate-intensity continuous exercise in losing body fat. It's a great method for people with short attention spans & people who lack motivation.

- **HIIT TRAINING**

High-intensity interval training is a form of interval training, a cardiovascular exercise strategy alternating short periods of intense anaerobic exercise with less intense recovery periods, until too exhausted to continue. These sessions are usually short, ranging from 15 to 30 minutes. The reason HIIT is so effective is that it produces excess post-oxygen consumption, (EPOC). EPOC raises your resting metabolic rate for twenty-four hours or more after your training session turning your body into a fat-burning machine.

- **FARTLEK TRAINING**

Fartlek Training is a fun way to improve your speed and endurance. Fartlek, a Swedish term that means "speed play," is a form of interval or speed training that can be effective in improving your running speed and endurance, there are no set time frames on the intervals. Fartlek running involves varying your pace throughout your run, alternating between fast segments and slow jogs.

Some workout ideas are listed below but do not forget that simple work like gardening, housework and DIY can be strenuous and provide a cardiovascular workout.

Don't forget that even when you use your car for short journeys it still burns fuel. Your body is the same!

For more help with training, look out on our social media pages (Facebook and Instagram). Also, for a more personalised programme, come and see a member of the fitness team.

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HOME FITNESS SESSIONS

- **CARDIO** – Walk / Run / Cycle for desired time
- **UPPER BODY** – Warm up 5 mins / cool down 5 mins / Pick 1 exercise from each section - 60-90 sec rest between sets
- **GVT** (German Volume Training Style)

	EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	PIC	NOTES
CHEST	PUSH UPS	10	10		Thinking about a push-up as a moving plank is helpful. The correct setup for a standard push-up is to position your hands shoulder-width apart, or a little bit wider. As you bend your elbows and lower toward the ground, your elbows should be at about a 45-degree angle to your body. Keeping the core always engaged, drive the body up not locking the elbows.
	SPIDERMAN PUSH UPS				Same as the push up except - Bring one knee into the side of the body in the lowering phase, trying not to twist. Keeping the core always engaged, drive the body up not locking the elbows and bring the leg back to straight
	SUPERMAN PUSH UPS				Same as the push up except - As you drive up, raise the opposite leg, and arm up in the air, maintaining balance. Pause for a second before repeating the sequence for other side
BACK	DORSAL RAISE WITH SCAPULA SQUEEZE	10	10		Lying face down on the floor, place your hands out wide. Slowly raise your chest off the floor 4 inches Ensure you keep to this range of movement to avoid hyper extension Squeeze your shoulder blades together with your thumbs up. Slowly lower your chest back to the floor
	INVERTED ROW				Keep your core tight and body straight throughout the exercise. Pull your shoulder blades down and back towards each other (like you're trying to pinch a pencil between them behind your back). Focus your mind on PULLING with your arms. Pull until your chest touches the bar (not your neck).
	PULL UPS				Grab the bar with a grip slightly wider than shoulder width, with your hands facing away from you. Start from a dead hang. Engage your shoulders, pull them down and back towards each other Flex your stomach, pull your body until your chest touches the bar.
BICEPS	BICEP PULL UPS	10	10		Hold a dumbbell in each hand at your sides, palms facing your hips During the lift, keep your elbows locked so that only your forearms move. This focuses the exercise on your biceps Curl the weights up until your thumbs are near your shoulders, then lower.
TRICEPS	TRICEP DIPS	10	10		Sit on top of the bench with your hands on the bench and touching the sides of your legs. Keeping your legs bent at a 90-degree angle. Slide yourself off the bench, but keep your body close to it. Lower your body by bending your elbows back behind you until your arms are in a 90-degree angle.








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HOME FITNESS SESSIONS

- **CARDIO** – Walk / Run Cycle for desired time
- **ABS / CORE** – Warm up 5 mins / cool down 5 mins
Pick 1 exercise from each section - 60-90 sec rest between sets
- **GVT** (German Volume Training Style)







	EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	PIC	NOTES
ABDOMINALS	Legs Up Crunch	10	10		Lie down on your back, with your legs vertically up, forming a 90-degree angle with your upper body. Point your hands towards your feet and keep staring at your toes at all time while performing this movement. Slowly raise your shoulders and upper back, concentrating on your upper abdominals.
	Crunch Pulses				Lie down on your back, with your feet flat on the floor and a bend in the knees. Always keeping your hands behind your head. Slowly raise your shoulders and upper back, concentrating on your upper abdominals. Pulse up for the repetitions
LOWER ABDOMINALS	Flutter Kicks	10	10		Lie on your back with legs extended. Lift your legs off the floor. Engage your core (place hands under bum to reduce pressure on your back). Move your legs up and down in a fast-swimming motion, alternating legs. To reduce back pain further raise legs higher and increase motion.
	Reverse Crunch				To perform a reverse crunch, lie flat on your back with your hands beneath your hips. Bend your knees and lift them towards your head, drawing them upward slightly at the end of the movement. Lower your feet back down just above the floor to complete one repetition.
OBLIQUES	Bicycle Crunch	10	10		Lie flat on the floor with your lower back pressed to the ground and knees bent. With your hands gently holding your head, pull your shoulder blades back and slowly raise your knees to about a 90-degree angle, lifting your feet from the floor. Exhale and slowly, at first, go through a bicycle pedal motion, bringing one knee up towards your armpit while straightening the other leg, keeping both elevated higher than your hips. Alternate to twist to the other side
	Heel Taps				Lie on the floor with the knees bent and the feet on the floor around 18-24 inches apart. Your arms should be extended by your side. This will be your starting position. Crunch over your torso forward and up about 3-4 inches to the right side and touch your right heel as you hold the contraction for a second. Exhale while performing this movement. Return to middle and repeat on left side.
CORE	Plank	10	10		Lie on the floor with elbows directly beneath your shoulders and legs fully extended. Raise your torso into the air until it makes a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles. Tighten your stomach, squeeze your bum, and hold this position for the desired amount of time.

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HOME FITNESS SESSIONS

- **CARDIO** – Walk / Run / Cycle for desired time
- **LOWER BODY** – Warm up 5 mins / cool down 5 mins
Pick 1 exercise from each section - 60-90 sec rest between sets
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	EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	PIC	NOTES
SQUATS	Squat Jumps	10	10		Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart, toes pointing slightly outwards. Inhale as you lower your hips back and down gently into your standard squat, aiming to keep your thighs slightly higher than your knees. Then, exhale and explode into the air with as much power as you can, driving hard with your legs and pushing yourself further upwards with the balls of your feet. Your body should be poker-straight while you're in the air, with your core tight. Land with your legs slightly bent before controlling your gentle descent back down into the squat position.
	Sumo Squats				Stand with your feet wider than shoulder width apart, pointing your toes outwards on a 30-45-degree angle. Keeping your head up and torso upright, (breathe in) flex from the hips & knees until your hamstrings are at least parallel to the floor. Hold for a second before (breathe out) pushing back up to the starting point through your heels.
LUNGES	Jumping Lunges	10	10		Prepare to jump by bending your knees and sinking down into a deep lunge. Lean slightly forward and contract your core muscles, keep the core engaged throughout the whole exercise. Quickly sink your weight down and then explosively drive both feet into the floor and launch your body upward, fully extending your knees and hips. As you jump into the air, bring your feet quickly together and switch positions as you begin to land. You should also switch arms as you do this. As you land, maintain a balanced foot position, keeping the knee back from going over the toes. Keep your hips back and allow your hips and knees to bend deeply to absorb the landing.
	Curtsy Lunge				Stand with one foot in line with the hip and other foot wider, outside of shoulder width. Draw a semicircle with your right foot, moving it clockwise until it crosses behind your left foot. Lunge down as deeply as possible, hovering your knee a couple of inches off the floor. Slowly return to the standing curtsy position.
HAMSTRINGS	Single Leg Hip Thrust	10	10		Prop your upper back and shoulders on a bench. Place your feet flat on the floor, sitting your hips low. Lift one leg, bending your knee and flexing your toes toward your head. Drive your anchor foot into the ground as you press both hips up toward the ceiling. At the top of the movement, squeeze your glutes and hold for two seconds.
GLUTES	Glute Kicks	10	10		Get on all fours, with your hands stacked directly under shoulders, and knees under hips. Make sure your back is flat and tuck your chin slightly so the back of your neck is facing the ceiling. Without rounding your spine, engage your lower abdominals. Keeping a slight bend in your right knee, slowly lift your leg straight back and up toward the ceiling. Your max height is right before your back starts to arch, or your hips begin to rotate.

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HOME FITNESS SESSIONS

Stretches – Hold each for 60 secs +

1. STANDING CALF STRETCH



- Stand facing a wall.
- Keeping both heels on the floor, take a big stride forwards with the right leg.
- Place your hands on the wall and keep the back leg straight.
- Lean into the front leg, ensuring the knee doesn't go over the toes. If this happens increase the stride.
- Hold for the desired period and repeat on the other side.

2. LYING HAMSTRING STRETCH



- Lay down on the floor.
- Bring the left leg straight up in the air and keep the right leg straight on the floor.
- Ensure that the hips always stay level.
- Hold onto the left leg and pull to the point of tension.
- Hold for the desired period and repeat on the other side.

3. LYING QUADRICEP STRETCH



- Lay down on your right side with your legs together and head supported with your hand.
- Lift your left foot up behind you and hold.
- Keeping the knees in line with each other, pull the left foot back.
- Keep the body and hips straight.
- Hold for the desired period and repeat on the other side.

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HOME FITNESS SESSIONS

Stretches – Hold each for 60 secs +

4. LYING GLUTE STRETCH



- Lay down on the floor with your head relaxed.
- Have a bend in both legs and feet on the floor.
- Cross the right leg over the left.
- Reach your right hand through your legs and left hand to the side, holding onto the left leg.
- Pull the left leg up so the foot is off the floor and push the right knee wide.
- Hold for the desired period and repeat on the other side.

5. INNER THIGH STRETCH



- Sit down on the floor, keeping your back nice and straight
- Hold onto both legs just before your ankles.
- Push the knees apart as wide as comfortably possible.
- Lean your chest forwards but stay upright and keep the back straight.
- Hold for the desired period.

6. BACK STRETCH



- Kneel on the floor, making sure your knees are in line with your hips and hands are in line with your shoulders.
- From this position slowly raise up the back so that the upper back is rounded.
- Pause for a few seconds then slowly lower the mid-point down to straight or if possible, arching the lower back.
- Continue for the desired period.

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HOME FITNESS SESSIONS

Stretches – Hold each for 60 secs +

7. CHEST STRETCH



- Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- Link your fingers behind your back, trying to always keep the arms straight.
- Making sure you keep the body upright.
- Push your shoulders back and raise the arms up.
- Hold for the desired period.

8. SHOULDER STRETCH



- Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- Raise your left arm up and across your chest.
- Bring the right arm up and around the left arm to pull it further around.
- Making sure that the left shoulder stays down.
- Hold for the desired period and repeat on the other side.

9. NECK STRETCH



- Sit down on the floor, keeping your back nice and straight.
- Hold onto the side of your head with your left hand.
- Gently pull your head towards the left shoulder and right arm down away from the right ear.
- Hold for the desired period.

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BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

There are many benefits of meditation including:

- Lower blood pressure
- Improved blood circulation
- Lower heart rate
- Less perspiration
- Slower respiratory rate
- Less anxiety
- Lower blood cortisol levels
- More feelings of well-being
- Less stress
- Deeper relaxation

- Maintain this meditation practice for two to three minutes to start, and then try it for longer periods.

HOW TO MEDITATE: SIMPLE MEDITATION FOR BEGINNERS

This meditation exercise is an excellent introduction to meditation techniques:

- Sit or lie comfortably. You may even want to invest in a meditation chair or cushion.
- Close your eyes. We recommend using one of our Cooling Eye Masks or Restorative Eye Pillows if lying down.
- Make no effort to control the breath; simply breathe naturally.
- Focus your attention on the breath and on how the body moves with each inhalation and exhalation. Notice the movement of your body as you breathe. Observe your chest, shoulders, rib cage, and belly. Simply focus your attention on your breath without controlling its pace or intensity. If your mind wanders, return your focus back to your breath.

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