

# HEALTHY OUTCOMES

Welcome to the dog  
days of August!

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## 10 Tips for Eating Healthy When Working From Home

*From the Cleveland Clinic | March 2020*

### How to keep your nutrition in check when your home is your office

You're on a conference call and somehow wandered into the kitchen. Next thing you know you're eating crackers and dry cereal out of the box. Or maybe you got so caught up in a project that you suddenly realize you haven't eaten a thing all day. Or perhaps the "I'll just have a handful of chips as I work" mentality turned into accidentally eating the entire bag.

Keeping your nutrition in check can be tough when your home is your office. You feel comfortable and there's plenty of food available. And unlike in the office, you're free to graze all day and the fridge is all yours. But this habit can wreak havoc on your waistline, sabotage weight loss and halt your productivity.

Registered dietitian Anna Taylor, MS, RD, LD, CDCES discusses strategies and hacks for eating healthy while working from home.

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The HCQU works with intellectual disabilities and behavioral health programs in Central PA to provide health care management services for adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities or Autism. Our goal is that all people living in PA, regardless of ability, receive the finest community services available – assuring that they are as healthy as possible and can fully participate in community life. The HCQU works to enhance access to community physical and mental health care through **FREE** education, public health outreach, advocacy and empowerment as well as to improve health care outcomes. Serving the following counties: Blair, Centre, Columbia/Montour/Snyder/Union, Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata, Lycoming/Clinton, Northumberland and Schuylkill.

# How to Make Time for Self-Care While Working From Home

From Indeed Career Guide | April 1, 2020

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that people stay home as much as possible to prevent the spread of COVID-19. One way employers are coping with these instructions is by enforcing a work from home mandate for the time being. For many people, working from home may be a new practice and may, therefore, require an adjustment in schedules, workflows and how they use their home space.

Making such changes at the same time as we're trying to prioritize the health of ourselves and our loved ones may create new sources of pressure in our lives. In this article, we'll discuss the importance of taking some time to take care of yourself and share examples of self-care practices you might find helpful.

## What is self-care?

Self-care is the practice of taking care of yourself to improve your health and wellbeing. The ways people practice self-care may look different depending on the things that make you feel well-rested, relaxed and refreshed to approach the current pressures of our changing lives.

## The importance of self-care during the coronavirus pandemic

One challenge for many people who recently switched to working from home is continuing to practice self-care while managing everything that requires our attention. You may be used to having your home separate from your workspace, for example, and need to make adjustments to balance your work and home life so you feel able to recharge and start the next day refreshed.

According to a recent *Indeed* study, over half of respondents said the best words to describe their feelings towards COVID-19 included "concerned," "cautious," and "worried." Paired with a major change in your work routine, such feelings may lead to burnout or decreased motivation. Taking steps to attend to your mental and physical health may help you work through the impact of COVID-19 on your job.

## Strategies of self-care while working from home

- **Set boundaries** – while working from home it's important to create new routines and schedules that help you distinguish between your home life and work life. When you are off-the-clock, turn off all work notifications and wait until your next workday to respond to work-related emails. This can help you feel like you are away from work.

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Autism and Intellectual Disabilities in Pennsylvania

by Patricia L. Brofee, RN, Training Coordinator, Geisinger Central PA HCQU

**AID in PA** is a resource collection for Pennsylvanians in the autism and intellectual disability communities. A joint effort between Autism Services, Education, Resources, and Training (ASERT) and the statewide Health Care Quality Units (HCQUs), AIDinPA is designed to connect individuals with disabilities, families, professionals, and community members with resources that can best serve them in emergency situations.

The Central PA HCQU recently provided information for self-advocates and community members on how to stay safe while having fun outside during the summer. Summertime means warm temperatures and all kind of outdoor activities like swimming, barbecues and cookouts. The summer of 2020 will be different than previous summers, but that doesn't necessarily mean you can't have fun. Summer gatherings and COVID-19 can mix – if you're careful. If you are going to be out in the sun, especially on a hot day, you need to stay safe. Learn the best way to beat the heat, enjoy friends and family and have a safe and pleasant water experience every time.

Visit the [AIDinPA.org](https://aidinpa.org) for self-advocate webinars offering tips on **summer heat safety, water and pool safety, and hosting gatherings or cookouts safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.** ■

<https://aidinpa.org/>

# 10 Tips for Eating Healthy....

(Continued from page 1)



- 1. Don't work in (or near) the kitchen.** Try to set up your desk in an area that's not near the kitchen. Decide that the only time you'll be in your kitchen during the workday is when you're getting ready to have a planned snack or meal.
- 2. Plan your snack and mealtimes.** Just as you schedule and plan out the rest of your day (get up, workout, shower), establish when throughout the day you're going to eat. If you know you like to eat lunch around noon, plan for that. And if you like to have a [snack](#) in the late afternoon, plan for that as well. Treat food like you would in the office. You can't be grazing all day long when you're there – so act the same way at home.
- 3. Make sure you actually eat.** It's important to know your [hunger signs](#) and realize that not eating can affect your alertness and productivity. Plus, eating throughout the day can save you from being a big hangry mess once 5 o'clock rolls around. If needed, set an alarm on your phone to remind you to get up and eat something.
- 4. Meal prep your lunches.** There's something freeing about being able to whip up whatever you want to eat for lunch (and not having to stand in line for the work microwave is a huge bonus). But for some people, the freedom is too much, especially when it comes to weekday lunches. If you can, try to [meal prep](#) your lunches ahead of time, just like you would on days you physically go to work.
- 5. Focus on real food.** [Balanced, nutritious food](#) makes us more productive. It keeps us fuller longer and helps us focus. Understand that what you eat will impact your mood and energy level. Think about this the next time you're feeling hungry and just want to grab a handful of

chocolate from the pantry. Focus on protein, fiber, healthy fats, fruits and veggies. Planning a menu ahead of time will make it easier to avoid nosing on whatever looks tastiest and quickest in the moment.

- 6. Drink plenty of water.** Dehydration can lead to headaches and fatigue, which are both not good for your productivity. Just as you'd fill up a water bottle at the office to keep at your desk, keep water next to your workstation at home too. If you have water readily available, chances are you're more likely to drink it, helping you reach your goal of at least 64 ounces per day.
- 7. Be careful of too much caffeine.** Having access to endless cups of coffee might seem like a great idea but tread carefully when it comes to caffeine. Too much is known to cause headaches, anxiety, digestive issues and even [fatigue](#) – none of which are ever good, but particularly not good when you're trying to work. Aim for no more than two cups of coffee per day to avoid the jittery feeling and avoid flavored creamers and other high calorie add-ins!
- 8. Don't buy junk food.** Don't stock your fridge or pantry like a vending machine. This can lead to eating just because you can! Try your best to keep junk food out of your house, especially foods you know can trigger a binge for you. Out of sight, out of mind.
- 9. When you eat, just eat.** You might be tempted to continue working through your lunch break now that your co-workers aren't physically there. But don't do it! Being distracted during a meal can lead to over-eating and decreased satiety (satisfaction and fullness) from the meal. Instead, take a break from work to sit down at a table to enjoy your lunch and relax for a few minutes. You'll enjoy the meal more, and it may even help you feel more prepared for the rest of your workday.
- 10. Portion out snacks and meals before eating.** Never eat out of the bag or original container, as it's much harder to control portions that way. Check the serving size on the container if you need extra guidance. For meals, try the healthy plate method: Fill half a 9-inch plate with non-starchy vegetables, one-fourth the plate with a lean protein (poultry, seafood, beans, eggs, tofu, cottage cheese or Greek yogurt) and one-fourth the plate with a high fiber carbohydrate (fruit, whole grains or starchy vegetables).

For more information go to <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/10-tips-for-eating-healthy-when-youre-working-from-home/> ■

# HCQU Day of Learning

As concerns continue with the COVID-19 pandemic and in light of the recommended social distancing and masking mandates that we are all following, we have made the extremely difficult decision to cancel our HCQU Day of Learning that was scheduled for October 8, 2020. We feel this is necessary to protect the health of our community, participants and the vulnerable population that we provide services to.

Our Spring HCQU Day of Learning is tentatively scheduled for **May 13, 2021**. I realize it is difficult to forecast future trainings. Our intention is to deliver the same training agenda in the Spring pending speaker availability. ■

## PPC MEETING

*The August meeting is cancelled!*

Informative website for resources during this COVID pandemic:

[www.NeighborlyPA.com](http://www.NeighborlyPA.com)



## Time for Self-Care...

(Continued from page 2)

Another important boundary is to make sure you have a designated workspace in your home. This way, once you are done with work, you can step away from your work area and decompress for the rest of the evening. If possible, find a desk and chair that allow you to comfortably sit up straight for hours at a time.

- **Create a routine** – the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 has changed many people's usual routines. Maintaining your regular morning routine can help you stay motivated and ready to start your workday. You might also find ways to improve or lengthen your morning routine with the time you usually spend commuting to work if that was part of your previous schedule.
- **Communicate your concerns** – working from home under these circumstances requires some adjustments. If you have any questions or concerns about how your work will be impacted by the coronavirus, communicate them to your employer or manager. They can help you create strategies to stay productive during this unprecedented time.
- **Keep your home organized** – a clean work environment can help you feel more relaxed while getting work done. Take some time to keep your work area and home clean and organized. Along with helping you feel better, cleaning your home regularly can also help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a set of recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting your home.
- **Eat healthy snacks** – if accessible to you, invest in healthy snacks that you enjoy and make you feel good. Doing so may help you maintain your energy level and stay focused throughout the day.
- **Find a workout you enjoy** – exercise has many health benefits, which is why it is such a great form of self-care. When choosing an exercise, find something that you enjoy doing. Since the CDC recommends that you stay at home during the coronavirus outbreak, it's important to find fun exercises you can do in your home. Several gyms, yoga studios and other fitness organizations across the country are offering free or reduced-cost virtual workout classes you can access online.
- **Get enough sleep** – the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says that most adults need between seven or eight hours of sleep each night. Sleep helps you maintain a healthy mind and body, improving focus throughout the workday. A regular sleep schedule can help you wake up feeling refreshed and ready for a new day.
- **Take breaks throughout the day** – taking regular breaks throughout your workday is essential to staying focused and reducing burnout. Step away from your work area to have an actual lunch break. You might also consider trying the Pomodoro Method by setting a timer for 25 productive minutes, followed by a short five-minute break. Mini exercises like stretching, jumping jacks, running in place and deep breathing can help you to stay motivated.

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# AVOID • SPOT • TREAT

## HEAT STROKE & HEAT EXHAUSTION

By the CDC.gov

In hot temperatures your body may be unable to properly cool itself, leading to serious health problems.

### Avoid

When the temperature is very high stay indoors. If you must go outside, dress properly and take breaks often. Know who is at high risk for heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

### Tips to Beat the Heat

- Drink plenty of water!
- Check on friends and neighbors at high risk for heat-related illness
- Find airconditioned places to cool off (shopping malls and libraries)
- NEVER leave kids or pets in a closed, parked vehicle
- If you go outside, remember:
  - A hat
  - Sunscreen (spf 15 or higher)
  - Lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing
  - Water
  - Limit time outdoors. Take breaks often
- Know who is at high risk:
  - Infants
  - Young children
  - Older adults
  - People with chronic medical conditions

### Spot

Know the signs of heat stroke



and heat exhaustion.

### Heat Stroke

Signs & Symptoms

- Very high body temperature (above 103°F)
- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Upset stomach
- Confusion
- Passing out

### Heat Exhaustion

Signs & Symptoms

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Upset stomach or vomiting
- Fainting

If you see any of these signs, get medical help immediately.

### Treat

While waiting for medical attention, you can help someone with heat stroke or heat exhaustion.

### Heat Stroke

Move the victim to a shady area or indoors. Do not give the person fluids.

Cool the body by:

- Placing person in a cool (not cold) bath or shower
- Spraying with a garden hose
- Sponging with cool water
- Fanning

Continue efforts to cool the person until help arrives or his or her body temperature falls below 102°F and stays there.

### Heat Exhaustion

Get medical attention if symptoms get worse or last longer than one hour.

Cool the body with:

- Cool, nonalcoholic beverages
- Rest
- A cool (not cold) bath, shower, or sponge bath
- Moving to an airconditioned room
- Wearing lightweight clothing

Seek medical help immediately if symptoms are severe or if victim has heat problems or high blood pressure.

Check it out at: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/> ■

## UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

(The words are taken from this month's articles and ads)

Neatlinton \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hicknet \_\_\_\_\_  
 Danage \_\_\_\_\_  
 Immersmute \_\_\_\_\_  
 Innirtuto \_\_\_\_\_  
 Anabna \_\_\_\_\_  
 Packerows \_\_\_\_\_  
 Scoutkoo \_\_\_\_\_  
 Newlistia \_\_\_\_\_  
 Techocoal \_\_\_\_\_  
 Landbace \_\_\_\_\_  
 Revalublen \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jettamunds \_\_\_\_\_  
 Andteam \_\_\_\_\_

### ANSWERS TO WORD SCRAMBLE:

Intentional, kitchen, agenda, summertime, nutrition, banana, workspace, cookouts, waitress, chocolate, balanced, vulnerable, adjustable, adjustment, mandate

## Time for Self-Care...

(Continued from page 4)

- **Connect with coworkers** – being intentional about maintaining connections with your coworkers virtually can help you relax while building relationships. Find a form of communication that can help you feel connected to your coworkers. It may be beneficial to start an online chat group that feels like casual conversations you may have around the office. You might also consider establishing a regular virtual happy hour, book club, lunch club or some other meeting time where you can connect weekly or biweekly to talk about non-work-related topics.
- **Consider meditation techniques** – meditation is a great self-care method that may help you adjust to working from home by offering an exercise to relax and readjust. Online meditation organization, Headspace, recently created a meditation collection called "[Weathering the Storm](#)" to help people cope with the outbreak. This free collection includes meditation, sleep and movement exercises. They also have a one-minute meditation that can help you find a relaxed sense of focus.

For more information visit *Indeed.com* at <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/self-care-while-working-from-home> ■



Do you have a favorite recipe?  
 You can submit it by sending to  
[lgmurphy@geisinger.edu](mailto:lgmurphy@geisinger.edu)

# Cooking Corner

## Campfire Banana Boat Chocolate Caramel S'mores

Submitted by Amy Weidner

- 4 ripe bananas
- 12 marshmallows (3 to 4 per banana), or a handful of mini marshmallows
- 12 squares dark chocolate (3 - 4 squares per banana)
- 1/4 cup caramel chips
- 8 graham crackers (2 per banana), crumbled



Cut a slit in each banana and open up slightly. Scoop out a few small chunks of banana (and eat!). Stuff 3 to 4 marshmallows in the scooped-out sections, then tuck a square of chocolate beside each marshmallow. Sprinkle a few caramel chips over top. Close the skin of the banana as much as you can and place the bananas directly on a campfire grill. Alternatively, wrap the bananas tightly in foil and place directly on coals. The banana skins will blacken as the bananas cook. Grill until the chocolate and caramel melt, and the marshmallows begin to look squidgy, 5 to 7 minutes. Using metal tongs, carefully transfer bananas on plates. The bananas might release some water, if they do, use a paper towel to wipe off. Sprinkle the crushed graham crackers over top and serve with a spoon for scooping. Bananas cooked directly over the grill will have a slightly smoky flavor. When wrapped in foil, they have less smoky flavor and will take a few more minutes to cook.

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