

MICHIGAN MEDICINE GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY AND COVID-19

Michigan Medicine's experts in Geriatric Psychiatry adapt care delivery and provide guidance on coping during COVID-19

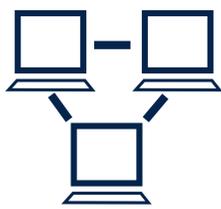
People who are 65 years of age or older are especially encouraged to practice Social Distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic due to their increased risk of severe illness. The Geriatric Psychiatry Program at U-M has rapidly adapted to this public health need.

In the past week,

We've initiated video visits for all of our clinics, allowing our patients' care to be provided virtually in their own homes



We've video-conferenced educational seminars for trainees so that learning can continue remotely



Our important research persists with staff conducting research interviews remotely



Maintaining your health during a time of social distancing

In-person visits from family and friends should probably stop, due to the risk of unwittingly transmitting the virus—but this increases the risk for loneliness. Worries and anxiety are heightened during these uncertain, uncharted times.

However, many older adults have exceptional resilience from a lifetime of practice of getting through tough times.

Tips to help prevent social distancing from becoming social isolation:

- Establish a daily routine: this is your anchor
- Set a daily goal: something small and doable from that 'round to it list
- Stay connected: mail, email, phone, and try some tech
- Reach out to others: connect with a "buddy" or family member daily
- Ask for help when you need it
- Get outside! Spring is on its way so enjoy spending some time outdoors

Ways to manage worry:

- "Dose" your news: more isn't better
- Physical activity: move, stretch, walk, exercise (outside, if you can!)
- Brain exercises: hobbies, puzzles, writing
- Restorative: deep breathing, meditation, tai chi, yoga
- Distraction: Puzzles, games, reading, movies, TV

What can others do to help the older adults in their life during this time?

- Initiate calls, letters, arrange home deliveries
- Have children or grandchildren send notes and artwork
- Give tech support for social connection
 - Coaching on how to video chat, text message, web search, navigate social media, video and program streaming
- To support loved ones with dementia, see tips at: [Rethinking Dementia](#)



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For more information on Michigan Medicine's Geriatric Psychiatry Program, visit our [website](#).