

STAYING HEALTHY DURING THE LOCKDOWN

CREATED BY THE SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING (SCEW)

RELIABLE NEWS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

The COVID India Data Tracker
<https://covidout.in/>

The US CDC Website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

For news and updates, rely on reputed news sources and channels and avoid getting your information from social media, hearsay or Whatsapp

Importantly, keep an eye on all official communication from your campus admins and directors.



**Symbiosis Centre for
Emotional Wellbeing**

With the lockdown extension, our patience is wearing thin day by day. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to determine when life, as we know it, will resume. However, we do have control over the efforts we extend towards maintaining good health – and consequently a better immune system – during the lockdown period. The confinement in spaces available to us and the lack of exposure to sunlight has organically disrupted our sleep, movement, and appetite. Given below are practical tips towards regulating them:

- **Scheduling:** With the lockdown causing a rupture in our daily routines, people are finding it hard to get a good night's sleep. To mitigate this, set a regular schedule with an aim to rise and sleep at about the same time each day/night. Maintain specific schedules for meals, tea/coffee breaks, and work periods. Mealtimes provide your body with vital 'time-cues'. Additionally, unless it was a part of your pre-lockdown schedule, avoid napping during the day. 'Sleepiness' is a valuable resource, save it for bedtime.
- **The Role of Light:** Since we cannot go outside as much as we used to before the lockdown, our exposure to daylight is very limited. Our eyes need exposure to outdoor light because the hormone 'melatonin' in our body regulates our sleep and wake pattern. Staying indoors leads to a lack of exposure to proper light which reduces melatonin levels. Hence, get at least 20 minutes of bright light exposure after rising (natural sunlight is optimal). Try to regulate the light in your home to mimic your regular environmental cues – plenty of bright light in the first two-thirds of the day, and then reducing it

through the evening. As the sun sets, begin to slow down your day. Create a sleep sanctuary by keeping the bedroom cool.

- **Screentime and Stress:** Reduce your exposure to blue light - as it limits melatonin production, thereby interfering with sleep wavelengths - by turning off your electronic devices before bed. Avoid watching news before going to bed. Negative news fires up the sympathetic nervous system (the part of our nervous system that runs on cortisol and adrenaline and fights stress). Watching news before bed time thus puts us into a hypervigilant state, which is just the opposite of what we need to get restful sleep. To enhance your sleep quality, consider simple 5 to 10 minute stress-relieving meditations throughout the day.
- **Caffeine:** Working at home, or simply being at home, offers a lot more opportunities for tea and coffee breaks. Caffeine is known to suppress the chemical 'adenosine' in our bodies, which contributes to sleepiness and promotes sleep. Additionally, avoid sugary foods too, especially in the evening.

The four pillars of our health - nutrition, sleep, regulation of stress, and physical activity - will also aid our mental well-being during the lockdown. The focus of this newsletter is particularly on sleep, because a good night's snooze will ensure that your day starts fresh, giving you the boost to strengthen the other three pillars of good health.

**IN CASE OF ANY MENTAL
HEALTH EMERGENCIES,
REACH OUT TO YOUR SCEW
CAMPUS COUNSELOR VIA
PHONE OR AT
MINDHELP@SIU.EDU.IN**

