



## Managing Mental Health for Prostate Cancer Patients during COVID-19

Prostate cancer patients and their loved ones are now dealing with both a prostate cancer diagnosis and the COVID-19 pandemic. It is understandable that this might add worry and concern to your prostate cancer journey. Remember, you are not alone.

Whether you are processing changes in treatment schedules, not being able to visit your doctor in person for appointments, loss of your job, distance from friends and family, or uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, checking in on your mental health during this time is extremely important.

### Utilize the following tips to manage stress and strengthen mental health:

- Control the constant stream of information
  - Step back and look at how much time you're spending taking in information.
  - How can that be cut down? Think about cutting back on news and social media.
- Create and follow a routine
  - Following a schedule creates better day-to-day mental health.
  - A routine allows you to have structure and confidence in how your day will flow.
- Exercise, straighten your posture and breathe
  - It is known that stress affects your body.
  - Incorporate some exercise - go for a walk, do arm movements.
  - Where are your shoulders? Relax them down away from your neck.
  - Take three deep breaths every so often - in through your nose, out through your mouth.
- Write down questions to ask your medical team
  - Let your caregivers, family members, and loved ones add their questions too.
  - Ask your doctor if you can set up a virtual meeting, if an in-person visit is not feasible.
  - If you aren't comfortable asking questions or if the answers are too overwhelming right now, have someone ask for you and share a portion of the answer with you.
- Keep connected
  - Stay virtually connected - using social media or video chat.
  - Use the phone - speakerphone is helpful to include others.
  - Put on your mask to go for a walk and wave at your neighbors from a distance.
  - Find a new activity to do with loved ones.
- Moderation is key
  - Be mindful of portion sizes while eating to prevent extreme weight gain.
  - People should be cautioned against drinking too much alcohol. Be mindful of limits.
- Ask for help
  - If you are experiencing extreme highs or lows that are not feeling manageable, reach out.
  - Contact your medical team, social worker, or call a hotline.