

# Bipolar Disorder and the Coronavirus Pandemic

## Maintaining Your Recovery

Living with bipolar disorder and managing your recovery requires being a full and active participant in your own treatment. That's especially true during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is understandable that you may feel worried or stressed during this time, and it's important to be aware of how you are feeling so that you can maintain your recovery.

### SELF-HELP TIPS

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Here are some things you can do to manage your mental health during this time:

- Continue to follow your wellness plan, or [create a wellness plan](#) if you do not have one.
- If you take medication, make sure you have enough on hand. Many medications can be obtained by mail, even overnight.
- Maintain your medical and/or psychotherapy appointments. Check with your provider about their ability to provide therapy by telephone or online.
- Keep the routines you have developed that make you feel good, like exercising, cooking, or meditation. Modify those routines as necessary to maintain physical distancing.
- Reach out to family members and friends for virtual visits, or find a buddy for support so that you can stay socially connected.
- [Keep informed](#) about the pandemic response, but limit your exposure to the news and social media. Be thoughtful about the amount that is right for you

### RESOURCES

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These resources can help with maintaining and enhancing your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- [Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance](#) is a national organization that supports people with depression and bipolar disorder and their families. Its website provides information and resources for managing mental health and features a search function to find online support groups.
- [Living with Bipolar Disorder](#) webpage offers self-help tips for maintaining your mental health.
- [MakeTheConnection.net](#) connects Veterans with information, resources, and potential solutions to issues affecting their lives, including those that relate to [bipolar disorder](#).
- [VA Mobile Apps](#) support self-care and overall mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- [Vets Prevail](#) can connect you to online support groups to help manage feelings of stress.
- [Veterans Crisis Line](#): If you are a Veteran who is having thoughts of suicide — or you're concerned about one — free, confidential support is available 24/7. Call the Veterans Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255** and **press 1**, text to **838255**, or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](#).

## STAY CONNECTED

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Technology has made it possible for all of us to stay connected. Seek support from your family, friends, mentors, clergy members, and people you know who are having experiences like yours. As a Veteran, your resilience and strength can also assist others during these times.

## KEEP YOUR MENTAL HEALTH APPOINTMENTS

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### Learn ways to connect with VA providers:

- VA offers both [video and phone](#) telemental health options that do not require you to go to your closest facility in-person should you have a medical concern or need to follow specific physical distancing guidelines in your community.
- [Schedule or reschedule your appointment online](#). If you are requesting a new mental health appointment, please call your [local VA](#) and they will work to arrange an appointment for you. If you need same day access for mental health services, call your [local VA](#) to request this and you will be connected to care.

## STAY INFORMED, STAY ENGAGED

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### Stay engaged with VA information as it becomes available so you can continue to maintain your mental health:

- [VA's Novel Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) webpage](#) has the most current information and [VA's Coronavirus FAQs page](#) provides answers to many important questions.
- You can communicate with your care team, track your health information, and access your VA health records from your computer or mobile device with [My HealtheVet](#).
- [VA Video Connect](#) provides secure video visits with your VA care team from anywhere.
- [Mental Health Apps for Veterans](#) help Veterans manage feelings of stress and anxiety and also remain in contact with their VA care providers.
- [Healthy Sleep](#) at My HealtheVet provides guidance on getting the right amount of daily sleep.
- [VA's Mental Health Coronavirus Page](#) has information on maintaining your mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 outbreak.

