

Resource

Taking care of your mental wellbeing?

Through the pandemic, many of us have seen less of friends and loved ones, spent periods of time shielding or self-isolating, and not been able to do many of the things we normally enjoy.

[Print Article](#)

[Here for You](#)

[Here for You is a new service by NRAS that allows you to arrange a call with someone with RA who understands you.](#)



Looking after mind and body

It's not always easy for you to stay healthy in mind and body during lockdown. The following are some useful resources to help you:

Mental Wellbeing

Whether you are fearful of the virus itself and its effects on people, society and the economy or you're just struggling with isolation, the following resources could help you. Looking after your mind is every bit as important as looking after your body.

[NHS COVID-19 anxiety tips](#)

There are some simple things you can do to help you take care of your mental health and wellbeing during times of uncertainty. Doing so will help you think clearly, and make sure you are able to look after yourself and those you care about.

[NHS Mindfulness Explained](#)

[NHS: Get your own online Mind Plan](#)

Fill in a very simple quick quiz, and general suggestions pop up or can be emailed to you.

[The Help Hub](#)

NHS information explaining how mindfulness can help with anxiety.

If you have found yourself on your own and feeling isolated and fearful – The Help Hub can support you.

The Help Hub is a group of qualified therapists who are giving their time free to help people feeling alone and scared. To book a 20-minute chat on Skype, FaceTime or on the telephone, simply click here:

[Mind UK](#)

(Copied from their website):

You might be worried about coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it could affect your life. This may include having to stay at home and avoid other people.

This might feel difficult or stressful. But there are lots of things you can try that could help your wellbeing.

This information is to help you cope if:

- you're feeling anxious or worried about coronavirus
- you're staying at home and avoiding public places, following Government advice that we should stay at home as much as possible
- you are self-isolating because you, or someone you live with, has symptoms of coronavirus. Self-isolating means that you stay home and keep away from other people.

And it covers:

- Practical advice for staying at home
- Taking care of your mental health and wellbeing
- Support for work, benefits and housing
- Checklist for staying at home

They have support for [young people](#) too.

[Mental Health Foundation UK](#)

The Mental Health Foundation is part of the national mental health response providing support to address the mental health and psychosocial aspects of the Coronavirus outbreak, alongside colleagues at Public Health England and the Department of Health and Social Care.

[BBC](#)

Useful article on protecting your mental health during the Covid-19 outbreak.

[Scotland Self Help Mental Health Advice](#)

Advice from Scotland's mental health association:

[Anxiety UK](#)

(copied from website) During the coronavirus pandemic, we will be extending our helpline hours to provide additional support in the evenings until 10 pm and over the weekend between 10 am -8 pm so that we can offer support to as many people as possible who need our help. (03444 775774).

Exercise

There is no set exercise that is suitable for all people with RA. How long you are able to exercise for and which exercises are suitable will depend on the severity of your condition and which joints are affected, but regular exercise is recommended for all with RA, and the following exercises may be useful:

NRAS

NRAS has a great section on exercise, including exercises that you can do from home:
<https://nras.org.uk/resource/exercise-videos/>

Tai Chi for Arthritis

Dr Paul Lam offers a range of Tai Chi exercises specifically for those with arthritis. Pre-lockdown this included physical classes, but they are also available through a subscription fee online or through purchasing a DVD: <http://www.onlinetaichilessons.com/tai-chi-for-arthritis/>

The Body Coach

Joe Wicks offers a range of work out videos for a variety of fitness levels, including P.E. videos for children, which many adults are also taking part in:
<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAxW1XT0iEJo0TYIRfn6rYQ>

NHS

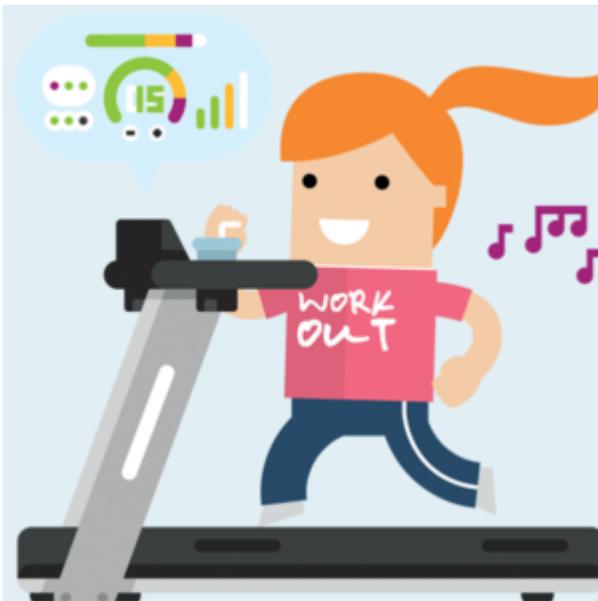
The following exercises are available through the NHS website:

[NHS fitness studio](#)

[NHS gym free workouts](#)

[Talkhealth](#)

Best at-home gym apps/free living room workouts



[Article](#)

Exercise during COVID-19 lockdown

During 2020 with COVID-19 and lockdown, a plethora of exercise gurus sprung up on the internet, but it can be hard to know which ones are safest for people with RA. When managing your health conditions, the best advice you can get is personalised information from your own health teams. However, many people have had limited access to them recently. So, we have done some research and wanted to share some tips with you from people living with RA.

Staying in touch apps

While contact with friends and family is limited, the contact we are able to have is particularly valuable. Telephone calls are great, but there are also a number of useful apps that allow you to see the people you are speaking to. This article is a useful guide to some of the most common apps, how they work and what you need to set them up.

- Skype has been around for a long time, and those who have used it may have experienced the frustration of video suddenly freezing up or issues with the audio. These can still be a problem when using on a laptop or PC, but the phone app is more reliable.
Set up an account by downloading the app from your phone's app store or go to www.skype.com
- Facetime is a popular function on Apple products, such as the iPhone and iPad. However, if you use an android phone, you will not be able to use Facetime. Click on the Facetime icon on your screen and search for someone in your contacts to call (they will need to have an Apple device to be able to take your video call).
- If you have an android device, you can use Google Duo. You will need to link it to your Google account, but no longer require a phone number to link to, if you wanted to use it on desktop.
Set up an account by downloading the app from your phone's app store or go to duo.google.com
- You will need a Facebook account to be able to access Messenger. Once on there, you can video chat, send videos, photos and typed messages and even play games with the person in your contacts.
Set up a Facebook account by downloading the app from your phone's app store or go to www.facebook.com
- WhatsApp is another popular app with similar functions to Messenger. It is now owned by Facebook, but you do not need a Facebook account to use it. Like Messenger, you can video chat, send videos, photos and typed messages.
Set up an account by downloading the app from your phone's app store or go to www.whatsapp.com

- Zoom is used by a lot of businesses for conference calls. You can set up a meeting and send a link to people to follow in order to join that meeting. It is also available as a phone app for personal or business use. Set up an account by downloading the app from your phone's app store or go to zoom.us/
- Like the above apps, you can use this app to video call one or multiple people. It is designed as a sociable app, so also includes various games, such as a drawing game, where one of you is given a word by the app and has to draw the image. The others have to guess as many of your images as they can within a short period of time. It is primarily designed to use on phones, so while there is a desktop computer version for the MAC, there isn't currently one for Microsoft Windows. Set up an account by downloading the app from your phone's app store or, for a MAC, go to houseparty.com/
- Zoom
- Houseparty

Hobbies

There are many local groups and individuals offering online support for a variety of hobbies and activities. If you already attended a particular group before lockdown, it may well be worth you contacting them or checking their website or social media channels to see if they are offering any online resources.

Many museums, art galleries, concerts and zoos are also providing online content to fill the gap for the public to enjoy them even while they are closed.

There are so many worthwhile hobbies out there. Whether you are looking for new ways to do an existing hobby or want to start something new, there are lots of resources to choose from, and these are just a few of them:

Theatre and song

The Sofa Singers

The Sofa Singers is a free & weekly online singing event from James Sills that brings hundreds of people together from around the world in real-time for 45 minutes of simultaneous singing <http://www.thesofasingers.com>

4Motion

Yoga, dance, theatre, meditation and family activities (small charge for classes as is a community interest group) <https://www.4motionic.com/?fbclid=IwAR2Fza1DrGxZmeX5K5VxsZTWNdtlueatRAmW4E-E9p-bl7F8crmS-fwpmOY>

National Theatre Live

Every Thursday from 7 pm UK time The National Theatre is offering a free live show performance

through their YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUDq1XzCY0NIOYVJvEMQjqw>

Crafting

[The Craft Council](#)

The Craft Council is offering a range of resources to help people during lockdown, including free access to their magazine's 50-year archive.

Kirstie Allsopp

Kirsty Allsopp has presented a range of craft activities, some aimed at adults and some at children, available to catch up on through All 4.

[Victoria's Crafty Ideas](#)

Victoria, who works for NRAS, has set up a YouTube channel with "how-to" craft videos. The aim of the channel is to inspire as well as teach crafts to complete craft novices or just novices to a particular craft.

Facebook groups

There are a huge number of great Facebook craft groups for inspiration or to share your work, including:

[Crafts On A Budget Official](#)

[Girls that make stuff](#)

[Handmade craft Network](#)

General

[Pinterest](#)

Pinterest is a site that allows you to 'pin' posts on your chosen topics to your own personal pinboard. It's great for craft ideas and pretty much any other topic.

Useful resources for children

Whether you're homeschooling, looking for kids' craft ideas or just need something to keep your children occupied during lockdown (or more generally), finding good resources can be hard. There are many great websites out there, but it can be hard to know where to start. The aim of this article is to give you that starting point.

Telling children about COVID-19

The following book has been created to explain the pandemic to children. The illustration style will be familiar to many children and parents, as the artwork is by Axel Scheffler, who illustrated *The Gruffalo* and many other children's books.

[Coronavirus – A book for children about COVID-19](#)

Overall education resources

The following resources cover a range of school subjects.

Schools:

Your own school may well be setting work for lockdown or offering suggested resources themselves, so be sure to check out what they have on offer.

[Twinkl](#)

Twinkl has thousands of great teacher-created resources providing entire schemes of work, lesson planning and assessments. They also have fun, educational games, colouring sheets and lots more. Many of the resources are free to download.

[BBC Bitesize](#)

BBC Bitesize is a free online study support resource, written by teachers and subject experts, providing support for learners aged 5 to 16+ across a wide range of school subjects. It also supports children and young people's wellbeing and career choices. From April 20th 2020 Bitesize started publishing daily lessons to help students across the UK with homeschooling.

Oak National Academy

This online bank of videoed lessons was set up in just 2 weeks to support schools in educating children during lockdown. Lessons are separated on the site by year and subject.

Reading and writing

Reading books to your child (or having them read to you if they are old enough to) as regularly as possible is great for their educational development. For younger children ask them to practice reading through phonics on everything from cereal packets to TV listings, as well as settling them down at night with a good book. Getting them to create their own books can also be fun and a good way to practice writing as well.

Alphablocks

Available on CBeebies and via their YouTube channel, these episodes help teach children sounds and spelling.

[Phonics Hero](#)

Currently offering a 7-day free trial, phonics hero offers a fun way for your child to learn phonics:

[Ruth Miskin](#)

Ruth Miskin's YouTube channel offers a wide range of videos helping children to learn how to read and spell.

[Audible Stories](#)

While the kids are off school Amazon have opened up the Audible catalogue for free, no account/subscription needed, no login/password required, just go to:

Libraries

Check with your nearest library online – you may be able to download ebooks and audiobooks for free.

Maths

Maths can sometimes feel like an alien language. Parents may find that the way some maths is taught has changed from the methods they learnt and some less frequently used maths may have gone from our memories, so these learning resources offer a great starting point for parents:

[The Maths Factor](#)

Normally £2 per week, Carol Vorderman's 'The Maths Factor' is currently offering free resources to help children learn maths at home.

Number blocks

Available on CBeebies and via their YouTube channel, these episodes help teach children numbers and mathematics.

[White Rose Maths](#)

Offering a range of free resources to make maths fun and understandable for children.

Science

Learning about science can really stimulate your child's mind. There are lots of engaging videos and books for children, and for those who are happy to make a mess there are also some great experiments you can try out at home

[Mini Professors](#)

Mini Professors is a great science class, aimed at children up to 5 years of age. There are Mini Professors classes all across the UK. Normally, pre-school children attend a physical class, but during lockdown, these classes are taking place from home. You will need to pay a fee and sign up to a class to join and be ready at the same time each week. You will also need to prepare a list of items needed for the experiments, but the classes are great fun and a brilliant learning experience. Each class covers two experiments, a story and a video on a particular topic.

[Nat Geo Kids](#)

National Geographic offers information aimed at children to help teach them about science and the natural world, as well as exploring outside of this world into space.

[Wow, Science](#)

Wow, science has a mix of resources, some of which need to be paid for and some that are free. They include a range of interesting science experiments for primary school children.

[Fridge Physics](#)

For GCSE level children, this site offers free resources until September (then £4.99 for a year subscription), this site helps explain the maths needed for physics exams.

Zoos

Many zoos are offering live feeds on their websites or videos of the animals on their YouTube channel. This can be a great learning resource, while zoos are closed.

Exercise

It's just as important to keep the body healthy as it is the mind during lockdown. If you are able to safely do so, taking your child out for regular walks is great and if you have a big enough garden to play sports in this is also good. Even just being in the fresh air, perhaps helping to pot plants, for example, can be helpful. There are also useful online exercise programmes that you can follow:

[P.E. with Joe](#)

Joe Wicks offers exercise videos for all ages, including his P.E. daily exercises for children.

Crafts

Crafts are not only fun activities but a really important way to stimulate your child's creativity. They're also great for improving fine motor skills and teamwork skills as you work on projects together.

[Pinterest](#)

Pinterest is a site that allows you to 'pin' posts on your chosen topics to your own personal pinboard. It's great for craft ideas for children. Let's say for example, that you have a bunch of toilet roll inserts and don't know what to make with them. Search 'toilet roll craft' and lots of ideas will pop up.

Kirstie: Keep Crafting and Carry On

Kirsty Allsopp has presented a range of craft activities, many aimed for children to do, alone or with their parents. Episodes have been aired on channel 4 and are available to catch up on through All 4.

[Toucanbox](#)

Toucanbox is a paid-for product that you can sign up for to get regular craft boxes delivered to your home, with your child's name on the box. You will receive all the craft supplies you need for your chosen craft activity, for children aged 3-8.

[Kids Art n Crafts](#)

This Facebook page offers a range of fun craft activities to do with children.

[Victoria's Crafty Ideas](#)

Victoria, who works for NRAS, has set up a YouTube channel with how-to craft videos, including this section, on crafts to do with and for kids:

Facebook groups for parents

School parenting pages

See if your school has a parents forum. This can be useful for ideas, keeping in touch and (when schools are open) a great way to ensure you haven't forgotten something you needed to prepare for, like a dress down day or a deadline to bring something into school.

[Quarantined with toddlers](#)

This group was set up during lockdown and is a great place to see ideas from other parents, as well as more light-hearted posts about parenting fails and what parents are doing to see them through this period.

NHS Volunteer Responders/Royal Voluntary Service: If you, or someone you know, needs a hand

collecting shopping or prescriptions, or just wants someone to talk to NHS Volunteers are here to help. Call 0808 196 3646 or visit nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk

Read more

[Depression and rheumatoid arthritis](#)

Depression can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, race, culture, level of wealth or profession. What is encouraging is that the people mentioned above have managed or continue to manage their condition and have full and active lives.

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