



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/high-angle-view-of-lying-down-on-grass-258330/>

# Wellness E-Bulletin

## Spring 2021

### This editions features:

#### Spring Wellness:

Living' La Vida Lockdown – living well in lockdown

Take your brain for a walk – mental health self care for busy people

Springtime Allergies during a pandemic

Wildlife in the Spring

RU OK Day

Getting into exercise

Safe Work Month – Think Safe, Work Safe, Be Safe

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Mental Health First Aid Courses

Supports for Staff and Students

### In the Health & Wellness Calendar:

“Steptember” (Cerebral Palsy Alliance)	September
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Womens Health Week	2 – 6 Sept
RU OK Day	9 Sept
Safe Work Month	October
World Mental Health Day	10 Oct
World Food Day	16 Oct
Movember	November
World Diabetes Day	14 Nov
Food Safety Week	13-20 Nov

(see back page for details on all these events)

Your contributions, news and feedback are welcome. To provide your suggestions email [whs@anu.edu.au](mailto:whs@anu.edu.au).



#safeworkmonth



[safeworkmonth.swa.gov.au](http://safeworkmonth.swa.gov.au)



#ThinkWorkBeSafe



# Livin' La Vida Lockdown!

As there is an abundance of wellness messages and information online, I'm just going to give you a quick list of tips for making the most of lockdown periods and staying well while we're staying home! These tips are for everyone including staff, students, families and kids!

1. Routine – stick to your usual waking and sleeping times and wherever possible do your exercise and have meals at the same times of day that you usually would. This will help you maintain healthy sleep patterns as well as making it easier to transition back to school, study or the workplace when the time comes. Having a bit of structure to the day helps to minimize anxiety (especially for kids) and keeps us connected to ourselves.
2. Set up your space – take the few minutes to set up a comfortable workstation for your work or study tasks at home.
3. Commute – before and after work or school, do a commute – do a lap of the house or the block where you live to make a mental break between home time and work/school time as well as getting some movement into your day.
4. Set boundaries – between home and work/school/study time, close the door at the end of the day if you have a home office, pack up or cover your work equipment. Say out loud “working day is done” and as much as possible stick to your usual work or study hours when at home. You don't have to be on call 24/7!
5. Make weekends different – have a different routine, with particular activities that are just for weekends so that they stand out and create enjoyable “bookends” to the week.
6. Count your savings – for some of us we are saving money on things like parking, fuel, commuting, eating out. Have a look at your budget to see if there are some positives to be had and make a positive plan for those extra savings.
7. Check your checking. While it's important to stay up to date, notice and resist the urge to be constantly checking the news. Choose a time each day to check one or two reliable sites and then choose to focus on other things for the rest of your time.
8. Practice gratitude – whether it's meditation, journaling or just a pause before bedtime, be deliberate about noticing the good things in your life. From the simplicity of a well made cup of tea, to gratitude for your health and the hard work of our health workforce, take a moment to be thankful and remember all the good things the world has to offer.

## Resources

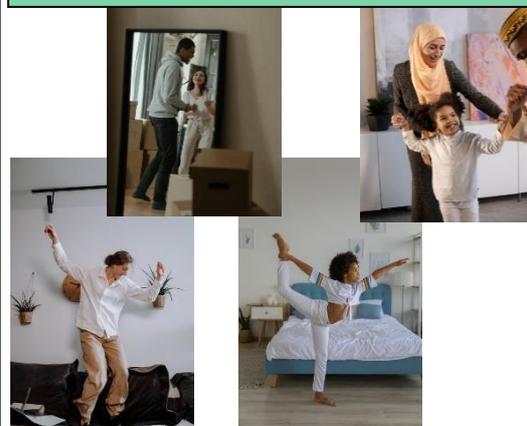
Information sheets on home workstations  
<https://services.anu.edu.au/human-resources/health-safety/injury-prevention-advice/injury-prevention-information-sheets>

ANU Sports Lunchtime workouts (lounge room friendly) <https://www.instagram.com/anu.sport/>

Comcare working from home  
<https://www.comcare.gov.au/about/forms-publications/documents/publications/safety/working-from-home-guide-employees.pdf>

Beyond Blue working from home  
<https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/impacts-on-my-work/working-from-home.html>

ABC – good news stories  
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/good-news/>



## Take your brain for a walk Mental Health Self Care for busy people

During busy times. When we need it most, is often when our self care routines can go out the window! Here's a few tips to continue to look after yourself, particularly your mental health during busy times. Good self care doesn't have to be time consuming to be highly effective at keeping you well, focused and productive.

1. Defend your sleep. Be highly protective of your sleep times and sleep routines. Without good sleep, every day can get harder and you will find yourself increasingly less productive and less creative in your work or study endeavours.
2. Take breaks and move. To work well the body and the brain need oxygen! Taking regular movement breaks or posture breaks is shown to increase productivity and creativity as well as reducing discomfort and injury. Stand up and pace while you're on the phone or in online meetings. Set a timer for a quick lap of the house or office every 30 minutes. Get regular movement into your day. Consider taking your team for walking meetings – we don't always have to meet seated indoors.
3. Breathe. Turns out breathing is really good for you! When we are too still or feeling stressed this can affect the way that we breathe, often taking very shallow or quick breaths that tells the brain and body that we are either asleep or in danger – neither of which are good states for creative and productive thinking! Notice your breath and your breathing and be deliberate about it. If you are very pressed for time then taking even just one slow deliberate breath every now and then throughout the day, paying attention to the current moment – just for one moment – is still a powerful and useful tool in managing the build up of stress and anxiety and maintaining a healthy mind.
4. Get outside. Whenever you can, get out in nature, even if it's just walking across the grass rather than a path on the way to a meeting, watching the clouds outside your window or taking a call while pacing around your backyard deliberately engage with the natural world.

## Allergies in a pandemic

For some of us, the emergence of the beautiful flowers and green growth of spring is the beginning of a very uncomfortable season of allergy and 2021 is forecast to be another high pollen season. 😞 Pollen from grasses, weeds or trees can trigger symptoms of allergic rhinitis (hay fever), and asthma. With the COVID virus being so highly contagious, symptoms such as sneezing or coughing may cause concern for our colleagues, friends or other community members. Being aware of allergy symptoms and seasons may help to ease those concerns and prevent any stigmatisation of allergy sufferers, however during the pandemic, additional consideration could be given to options to work from home while symptomatic wherever practicable.

While exposure to allergens is difficult to avoid, there are several ways to prevent or reduce pollen allergy symptoms:

- Stay indoors until after midday, particularly in the pollen season and on windy days.
- Avoid going out during, or after thunderstorms, particularly when pollen counts are high. Information about Australian pollen counts is available at [www.pollenforecast.com.au](http://www.pollenforecast.com.au)
- Wear sunglasses, carry tissues, shower when you arrive home, and rinse your eyes with water.
- Do not mow grass and stay inside when it is being mown. If mowing is unavoidable, wear a mask or take a non-drowsy antihistamine.
- Keep windows closed at home and in the car. Use recirculating air conditioning in the car.
- Do not picnic in parks or in the country during the pollen season.
- Try to plan holidays out of the pollen season or holiday at the seaside.
- If landscaping at home, research plants that are less likely to trigger allergic rhinitis or asthma. If you are sensitive to particular weeds or trees that are outside your bedroom window, consider having them removed or relocated.

Effective treatments are available! Seek advice from your treating healthcare provider about medications and other interventions that may relieve your symptoms.

### Resources

<https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergic-rhinitis-hay-fever-and-sinusitis/pollen-allergy>

[www.pollenforecast.com.au](http://www.pollenforecast.com.au)

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/chronic-respiratory-conditions/allergic-rhinitis-hay-fever/contents/allergic-rhinitis>



## Wildlife in the springtime

'ello



### Resources

Phone Access Canberra - 13 22 81 to report a swooping bird.

[https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/93/~magpies](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/93/~magpies)

<http://canberrabirds.org.au/birds/australian-magpie/>

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6012262/brace-yourself-canberra-magpie-swooping-season-begins/>



If you've lived in Australia for more than a year, you'll likely be familiar with the relentless activity of our native birds defending their young during spring. Magpies are particularly well known for marking out and aggressively defending their territory. They are doing this as they are very diligent and protective parents! Magpies will swoop and attack pedestrians, cyclists, pets and any other intruders on their territory during this time which lasts anywhere from late August to the end of October and we frequently see injuries to ears, faces and potentially eyes from these attacks.

Individual birds differ in how aggressively and how closely they protect their nests, some birds having a broad territory and no tolerance for anyone coming into it, while others will only attack if you get very close to their particular tree. Where a swooping magpie territory has been identified, ACT Government or ANU will post signs giving a warning. If possible, find an alternative route to avoid the Magpie's territory or carry an umbrella or branch overhead to protect yourself from attacks. If you are cycling, you can put cable ties across your helmet to stop the birds getting to your head and face but be prepared for them to still "have a go". Whether walking, running or cycling, if you slow down on approach to the magpie's territory, dismount from your bike and walk quietly, you present yourself as less of an imminent threat and some birds will be less likely to attack. But if you can't avoid the area, you may just have to "run the gauntlet" until the season passes. Magpies are a native bird and all native birds, their eggs, young and their nests are protected by the [Nature Conservation Act 2014](#) and the [Animal Welfare Act 1992](#). It is illegal to interfere with them in any way.

Our beautiful "ANU ducks" on campus are also on high alert protecting their young. As cute as they are, getting close to take photos will only cause the birds distress and will provoke them to attack. The parent birds can give a nasty bite so give these new families plenty of space and be aware of them on or near the roads when riding or driving.

As the weather warms up, you may also see increased snake and insect activity so exercise caution and gives these creatures a wide berth. They're not likely to be aggressive unless you present yourself as a threat to them, basically you leave them alone and they'll leave you alone. In general, all our wildlife is more active at this time of year so watch out for them on or near the roads as they move about for food and are herding their young families about. But in all of this, remember what a privilege it is to live so closely with our beautiful and unique wildlife, enjoy their presence and their fascinating behaviors - from a safe and respectful distance!



Ask them  
today

**RUOK?**

A conversation could change a life.

Learn how to ask at [ruok.org.au](http://ruok.org.au)

#### Resources

Lifeline (24/7) 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Suicide Call Back Service (24/7) - 1300 659 467 [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

beyondblue (24/7): 1300 224 636  
[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

#### ANU Staff support:

<https://services.anu.edu.au/human-resources/wellbeing/employee-assistance-program>

#### ANU Counselling:

[www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/counselling/anu-counselling-centre/introduction-to-mindfulness](http://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/counselling/anu-counselling-centre/introduction-to-mindfulness)

#### Crisis Support Line for Students (24/7)

<https://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/support-is-always-there-new-after-hours-crisis-line-opens>

## R U OK? Day 9 September 2021



THIS YEAR THE MESSAGE IS:

Are they really OK? Ask them today.

'THERE'S MORE TO SAY AFTER R U OK?'

In challenging times it's more important than ever for us all to say connected and, for those who are able, be willing to support those around us. Learn what to say when someone says they're not OK so you can continue a conversation that could change a life.

You don't have to be an expert to keep the conversation going when someone says they're not OK. By knowing what to say you can help someone feel supported and access appropriate help long before they're in crisis, which can make a really positive difference to their life.

For more information on how to start a conversation, visit

<https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>

R U OK? Day is a national day of action dedicated to reminding everyone to ask "Are you OK?" and to remember every day of the year to support people who may be struggling with life's ups and downs.

Use the resources listed here to get some tips on how to have an "R U OK? conversation" with someone you're concerned for or to get support for yourself.

Take care of yourself and look out for your colleagues and friends!

## Getting into exercise



#### Resources

ANU Sports Lunchtime home workouts  
<https://www.instagram.com/anu.sport/>

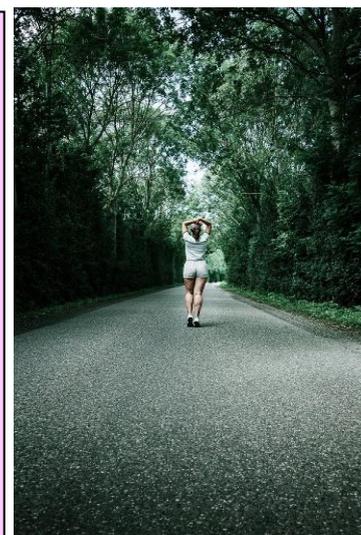
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2017-03-18/where-to-start-when-you-havent-exercised-in-a-while/8360262>

<https://visitc Canberra.com.au/articles/174/sporty-spring-in-canberra>

<https://hercanberra.com.au/active/move/seven-days-of-at-home-exercise-for-seven-days-of-lockdown/>

As the weather warms up and the light returns to our mornings and evenings, those of us who have been hibernating over winter will start to emerge and return to our usual exercise routines. Whether it's a morning walk or jog, an evening workout session to end the day, if you've had a break from your usual exercise activities or from any exercise at all it's important to ease back into it. Be particularly diligent with your warm up activities, give yourself extra time to complete a trip, or a favourite circuit and be gentle with your body as it gets back up to speed.

It might also be a good time to check out your gear. If you haven't ridden the bike or worn the runners for a while, are they still in good condition and allow you to be safe, and injury free as you get back out and about.



# October is Safe Work Month

October is National Safe Work Month—a time to commit to building a safe and healthy workplace. During October each year, Safe Work Australia asks all workers and employers across Australia to commit to safe and healthy workplaces for all Australians.

Being healthy and safe means being free from physical and psychological harm. No job should be unsafe and no death or injury is acceptable. A safe and healthy workplace benefits everyone.

**The theme for National Safe Work Month this year is think safe. work safe. be safe.**

This October **think safe. work safe. be safe.** at your workplace by planning and implementing work health and safety procedures. Everyone can support a safety culture at their workplace and promote best practice work health and safety initiatives.



**think  
safe.**

this October,  
how will you  
ensure your  
work is a healthy  
and safe place?

**national safe  
work month**

#safeworkmonth  
#ThinkWorkBeSafe  
safeworkmonth.swa.gov.au

## Resources

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/national-safe-work-month>

ANU has gold accreditation from the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Safe Workplaces Program and is continuing to offer training to our staff in this important area throughout lockdown.

All first aid officers at ANU are now required to also hold a MHFA qualification and we are thrilled with the uptake in these courses allowing for more members of our community to be informed and feel confident in supporting someone with a mental health problem or facing a mental health crisis.

In an emergency situation you can always call 000 for assistance but you may also consider call

CATT (ACT Health Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team): 1800 629 354 (24 hour service); (02) 6215 1065 (Business hours);

ANU Crisis Support Line for Students 5pm-9am weekdays, 24/7 weekends and public holidays  
Phone (voice calls only): 1300 050 327; SMS Text message service: 0488 884 170

Lifeline Canberra Ph: 13 11 14 (24 hours); Suicide Call Back Service Ph: 1300 659 567; Kids Helpline (for people aged 25 and under) Ph: 1800 55 1800 (24 Hours); ANU Security Ph: 6125 2249

## Mental Health First Aid



### Resources

**MHFA at ANU -**

<https://services.anu.edu.au/training/mental-health-first-aid-courses>

**About MHFA -**

<https://www.mhfa.com.au/>

## Supports for staff and students



### *ANU Employee Assistance Programs (EAP):*

Staff and their immediate families are entitled to 4 free sessions (and more can be negotiated if required) per year

#### **Relationships Australia:**

Phone (02) 6122 7100

Website: [www.relationships.com.au](http://www.relationships.com.au)

#### **Assure:**

Phone: 1800 808 374

Website: [www.assureprograms.com.au](http://www.assureprograms.com.au)

**Assistance for managers:** Managers are encouraged to approach their local Human Resources (HR) Manager for assistance initially, then HR Division and/or the Adviser to Staff. Assure also offer a Manager Support Program (MSP) on **1800 505 015**.

### *ANU Advisor to Staff*

**Phone:** Chancery (+61) - 02 6125 3616 Counselling Centre (+61) - 02 6125 2442

**Email:** [Staff.Adviser@anu.edu.au](mailto:Staff.Adviser@anu.edu.au) or [Gail.Frank@anu.edu.au](mailto:Gail.Frank@anu.edu.au)

**ANU Counselling:** Free service, no referral required.

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/counselling/anu-counselling/appointments>

**ANU Psychology Clinic:** By referral and appointment only. Fees apply but at a reduced rate. Ph: +61 2 6125 8498; Email: [psychology.clinic@anu.edu.au](mailto:psychology.clinic@anu.edu.au)

**ANU Thrive:** Student led programs for wellbeing

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/anu-thrive>

**ANU Chaplaincy:** Multi-Faith service.

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/chaplaincy>

**Respectful Relationships Unit:**

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/respectful-relationships-unit>

**Academic Skills** Can assist with time management, study/workload planning

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/academic-skills>

**Access and Inclusion:** For students with medical needs and/or disabilities:

<http://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/access-inclusion>

# Coming Events

<b>Steptember (for the month of..)</b>	
Run by Cerebral Palsy Alliance, the Steptember charity event challenges people to take 10,000 steps a day for 28 days straight in, yes you guessed it, the month of September. Unlike many other charity challenges, Steptember is done in your own time. Just take 10,000 steps a day whenever you like, wherever you like, and log your steps online. Sounds easy, right? Well, perhaps not. But certainly rewarding, inspiring – and enormously appreciated! <a href="https://www.steptember.org.au/">https://www.steptember.org.au/</a>	
<b>Dementia Awareness Month - September</b>	
	The purpose of Dementia Awareness Month is to encourage Australians to become dementia-aware, have a better understanding of what it is like for a person to live with dementia, and ultimately be encouraged to create communities where people with dementia are supported to live a high quality of life with meaning, purpose and value. <a href="https://www.dementia.org.au/nsw/dementia-awareness-month">https://www.dementia.org.au/nsw/dementia-awareness-month</a>
<b>Women's Health Week 6 - 10 September</b>	
Women's Health Week is a week aimed at encouraging women to take the time to focus on their health and wellbeing. The week includes events in communities around Australia as well as online resources including motivating videos and practical tips and information from experts and ambassadors. <a href="https://www.womenshealthweek.com.au/">https://www.womenshealthweek.com.au/</a>	
<b>R U OK Day 9 September</b>	
	Are You Ok Day is an annual national day of action that aims to get Australians, right across the entire spectrum of society, connecting with friends and loved ones, by reaching out to anyone doing it tough and simply asking: "Are you ok?" talking about suicide with someone at risk actually reduces the chances of them taking their life. It is the one thing we can all do to make a real difference. R U OK? Day is about prevention, preventing little problems turning into big problems. <a href="https://www.ruok.org.au/">https://www.ruok.org.au/</a>
<b>National Safe Work Month - October</b>	
October is National Safe Work Month—a time to commit to building a safe and healthy workplace. During October each year, we ask workers and employers across Australia to commit to safe and healthy workplaces for all Australians. Being healthy and safe means being free from physical and psychological harm. No job should be unsafe and no death or injury is acceptable. A safe and healthy workplace benefits everyone. The theme for National Safe Work Month this year is think safe. work safe. be safe. This October think safe. work safe. be safe. at your workplace by planning and implementing work health and safety procedures. <a href="https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/national-safe-work-month/about">https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/national-safe-work-month/about</a>	
<b>World Mental Health Day 10 October</b>	
The 2021 World Mental Health Day campaign 'Mental Health in an Unequal World' will enable us to focus on the issues that perpetuate mental health inequality locally and globally. We want to support civil societies to play an active role in tackling inequality in their local areas. We want to encourage researchers to share what they know about mental health inequality including practical ideas about how to tackle this. <a href="https://wfmh.global/2021-world-mental-health-global-awareness-campaign-world-mental-health-day-theme/">https://wfmh.global/2021-world-mental-health-global-awareness-campaign-world-mental-health-day-theme/</a>	
<b>World Food Day 16 October 2021</b>	
	Collective action across 150 countries is what makes World Food Day one of the most celebrated days of the UN calendar. Hundreds of events and outreach activities bring together governments, businesses, NGOs, the media, and general public. They promote worldwide awareness and action for those who suffer from hunger and for the need to ensure healthy diets for all. #WorldFoodDay 2021 will be marked a second time while countries around the world deal with the widespread effects of the global Covid-19 pandemic. It's a time to look into the future we need to build together. <a href="http://www.fao.org/world-food-day/about/en/">http://www.fao.org/world-food-day/about/en/</a>
<b>November is Movember</b>	
The leading global organisation committed to changing the face of men's health. Thanks to the support of Mo Bros and Mo Sistas we've funded more than 1,200 projects saving and improving the lives of men all around the world. Since 2003, we've committed ourselves to helping men live happier, healthier, longer lives. Millions have joined us. <a href="https://au.movember.com/">https://au.movember.com/</a>	
<b>World Diabetes Day - 14 November</b>	
	WDD is the world's largest diabetes awareness campaign reaching a global audience of over 1 billion people in more than 160 countries. The campaign draws attention to issues of paramount importance to the diabetes world and keeps diabetes firmly in the public and political spotlight. Every year, the World Diabetes Day campaign focuses on a dedicated theme that runs for one or more years. The theme for World Diabetes Day 2021-23 is Access to Care. <a href="http://worlddiabetesday.org/about/">http://worlddiabetesday.org/about/</a>
<b>Food Safety Week 13 – 20 November</b>	
	Australian Food Safety Week is the major activity of the Food Safety Information Council, Australia's leading disseminator of consumer targeted food safety information. Australian Food Safety Week 2021 will be held from 13 – 20 November 2021. This year's theme 'Food safety – be prepared' is aimed at building resilience in the community especially after disasters by setting up basic food safety toolkits and encouraging public engagement with food safety courses. <a href="http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/">http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/</a>