



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Staying Calm and Connected While You're in the Hospital

Being in the hospital is always hard, but we realize that it's even harder now during the COVID-19 outbreak.

You may find that your healthcare providers enter your room less often and stay for shorter periods of time than what you may have experienced in the past. They may also call your hospital room phone or cell phone to check on you. Limiting contact with people is an important way to keep COVID-19 from spreading.

Not being able to have your friends and family visit may have you feeling lonely and scared. Here are some tips to help:

- **Stay connected to your family and friends.** While you may not be able to be with your loved ones in person, you can call, text, and video chat with them. You may find it helpful to plan daily calls with your loved ones that you can look forward to. If you feel up to it, you can also try video chatting while playing a game with your friends and family.
- **Try relaxation techniques.** Relaxation techniques, such as deep breaths, stretching, and meditating can help you manage stress. You can listen to free guided meditations offered by our Integrative Medicine Service by visiting www.mskcc.org/meditation. You can also find meditation, guided imagery, and other relaxing videos in the “My Learning” section on the interactive TV screen in your room. You can also attend an online class in group meditation, yoga,



guided imagery, and other relaxation techniques. Email mindful@mskcc.org and ask our therapists to help you choose classes best for you.

- **Take a break from the news.** Take breaks from watching or reading the news, including what's on social media. The interactive TV screen in your room has a category called "Entertainment & Relaxation" where you can find movies as well as relaxation videos.
- **Try some distraction.** Activities such as reading, coloring, crossword puzzles, and word searches may help keep your mind busy. If you don't have anything like that with you, ask a member of your healthcare team for some.
- **Request an online music therapy session.** Music therapy can be relaxing and relieve stress. To request a session with an MSK music therapist, ask your nurse for a referral.
- **Meet one of our Caring Canines online.** You can schedule an online video visit through Zoom with our therapy dogs by emailing the Volunteer Office at volunteerresources@mskcc.org.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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