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Safety Focused

As you do your best to stay safe from COVID-19, it's important that you don't overlook your mental health.

Presented by

Maintaining Your Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to impose itself upon the world, forcing people to self-quarantine and practice social distancing. But, while keeping your distance from others is a necessary step in order to protect your physical health, not seeing your friends, family or co-workers for such an extended period of time can be harmful to your mental well-being.

As you do your best to stay safe from COVID-19, it's important that you don't overlook your mental health. In order to keep your spirits up during the pandemic, consider the following tips:

- **Get some fresh air**—Even if just for a few minutes, take some time to get some fresh air throughout the day while also abiding by social-distancing guidelines set by your local health officials.

- **Have a routine**—Do your best to stick to a personal routine. For example, if you used to go to the gym to start your day, try to still get a morning workout in at home.

- **Maintain your sleep schedule**—Avoid developing bad habits, like sleeping in or staying up too late.

- **Use technology**—Combat feelings of loneliness, and stay in touch with your friends and family by using technology, like video chat software or social media.

- **Regulate your updates**—Limit how often you check the news for new information about COVID-19. Checking for updates all day can lead to stress or feelings of being overwhelmed.

If you have concerns about your mental well-being, contact a mental health professional or use the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) National Helpline by calling 800-662-HELP (4357).

Wheeler Taylor

Managing Back Pain at Work

Whether you're working from home, in an office or elsewhere, one common ailment that can affect employees across a wide variety of industries is back pain.

Back pain can make it harder to accomplish ordinary tasks at work. Even if you are still able to perform your duties, back pain can make doing so more time-consuming or difficult.

Types of Pain

Back pain is often categorized into these three levels of severity:

- **Acute**—This type of pain can be mild or severe, and refers to an ailment that may have been caused by an accident or injury. The pain should usually not last longer than seven days.

- **Subacute**—The pain level for subacute back pain is usually mild, but can occasionally be severe. Subacute problems are usually unrelated to other illnesses and can last a few weeks.

- **Chronic**—Chronic back pain refers to an ailment that lasts longer than three months. The level of pain can vary, and the condition may be related to other illnesses.

Common Causes

While back pain is a condition that can stem from many different hazards, it is often caused by one of the following factors:

- **Repetition**—Repeating a specific motion, specifically those involving twisting or bending over

- **Force**—Putting too much pressure on your back, such as while lifting a heavy object

- **Inactivity**—Being inactive for long periods of time and then resuming activity

Prevention

In order to prevent or manage back pain, consider the following tips:

- **Use proper posture**—Whether you spend a lot of time standing at work or you sit at a desk, try to keep your weight balanced evenly and avoid slouching.

- **Make adjustments**—Modify your work to limit the pressure that is put on your back. Make sure that your desk and chair are adjusted properly and that you are using helpful equipment, such as lifting devices.

- **Take a break**—If you've been on your feet for a long time, give yourself a break. If you've been sitting for a prolonged period, take the time to stretch or take a short walk.

Back pain should not be taken lightly. Back injuries can not only make your time at work more difficult, but also significantly diminish your overall quality of life. If you are experiencing back pain, inform your supervisor and talk to a doctor.