

# WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK 2020

## SELF-CARE FRIDAY

With our often heavily burdened daily life and ever-increasing responsibilities, do we take the time to check in with ourselves and how we are really doing?

Self-care is not a new phenomenon but it tends to be overlooked and not embraced as much as it needs to be. It isn't always about luxurious pampering (although that can be lovely!) and it shouldn't be viewed as selfish or self-indulgent. It's about taking conscious and intentional actions to boost mental and physical health.



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Self-care is a very important building block to help you buffer the challenging times and enjoy the good times. Another way of thinking about it is that self-care isn't always just about doing what you feel like doing, it's also about doing what you need to do to take care of yourself and your life in a way that sets you up to thrive with great wellbeing. It's time to put you and your own self-care on your to-do list.

Introducing self-care rituals and habits into your life can be great for your mind and body, helping you to restore, reset and function at your best. Here are some of the self-care superstars:

- ✓ Take regular breaks. Let yourself rest and enjoy down time. Try the Danish practice of Hygge ("cosy contentment").
- ✓ Move your body in enjoyable ways – dance in the living room, do a yoga class (online or in person), walk, stretch or any other movement that feels good to you.
- ✓ Eat a nutritious and balanced diet to support good mental and physical health.
- ✓ Practise meditation, mindfulness or deep breathing exercises.
- ✓ Implement a nurturing bedtime routine to encourage good quality sleep.

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Developing your very own self-care plan can help take you out of auto pilot and benefit your overall health and wellbeing. Here we explore the different areas of your life that can benefit:

### **Mental self-care:**

- Try not to give too much attention to your inner critic (we all have one), practise kindness towards yourself instead.
- Journal about your feelings.
- Practise the gratitude attitude – write or think about 3 things a day that you feel thankful for – no matter how small.
- Talk to people about how you're feeling.
- Give yourself permission to say no.
- Savour positive moments and experiences. For example, slow down to enjoy your first cup of tea or coffee for the day.
- Listen to music you enjoy.

### **Physical self-care:**

- Give yourself a foot rub.
- Stay hydrated.
- Spend time in nature. Take in sunrises and sunsets.
- Go to the dentist, doctor or other health care professional when needed.
- Let yourself rest when you're sick.

### **Work self-care**

- Set healthy boundaries.
- Further your knowledge.
- Connect with your values and sense of meaning or purpose in your work.
- Implement a routine or ritual to mark the end of the working day and transition you into your home life.

You can find more information at [www.womenshealthweek.com.au](http://www.womenshealthweek.com.au) or by emailing your SMG Health Wellness team at [wellness@smghealth.com.au](mailto:wellness@smghealth.com.au)