

Marines,

Your health and well-being are of primary importance to me. To enhance your immune system, minimize the chance of spreading COVID-19, and lessen the severity/hasten your recovery should you become ill, there are four areas of human performance which require your immediate attention: physical fitness, nutrition, hygiene, and resiliency.

Physical Fitness:

Moderate exercise has been linked to positive immune system response. Regular, moderate physical activity and/or frequent structured exercise reduces the incidence of communicable diseases such as viral and bacterial infections. It is believed that regular, consistent exercise can lead to substantial benefits in immune system health over the long-term. That said, human performance research shows that extended periods of high-intensity endurance exercise can make athletes more susceptible to illness for up to 72 hours after the exercise session. Marines should continue to exercise but temporarily suspend high intensity workouts, endurance heavy training, and working out in large groups or in close proximity to others. Additionally, get appropriate recovery and rest (7-9 hours of sleep per night). A sleep-deprived immune system will have more trouble fighting off a virus.

<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-compelling-link-between-physical-activity-and-Nieman-Wentz/966f955ad2a14b09520e79d0799e54c19cd7c370>

Our resident Force Fitness Instructor and Strength and Conditioning Specialist have posted a physical fitness program to FitForce called "Barracks Room Fitness." The program contains short workouts designed to maintain your fitness when confined to barracks room or residence during COVID-19 restrictions. The movements utilize body weight, in addition to objects most Marines have access to such as a weighted day pack in lieu of a sandbag. This program will be updated weekly.

Instructions to get on FitForce and the Barracks Room Fitness program:

- Open internet browser on any mobile device and enter url: <https://fitforce.aptime.com/mobile>
- At the login screen touch, "create an account" and fill out the required information.
- Once account is successfully created select, "go to FitForce Mobile".
- Log into FitForce mobile with created log in
- Accept risk notification
- Touch "select a Group" then "+/- Manage Groups"
- Add "USMC Workout of the Day"
- Select "Change Plan" and select the plan "Barracks Room Fitness"

Nutrition:

Nutrition is a critical component of immunity and optimizing human performance. For more information on proper diet and nutrition for immunity:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/dietary-supplements>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9250133>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3166406/>

Hygiene:

COVID-19 is primarily spread by close/direct contact with an infected person. COVID-19 enters the body through the lungs, mouth, nose and eyes. Good hygiene can dramatically slow the spread of COVID-19.

Current recommendation by the CDC include:

- Wash your hands frequently. Use soap for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available. The [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) has issued great tips on [how and when to wash your hands](#). There is also great tips on when to use [hand sanitizer](#). Be sure that it contains 60% alcohol, the CDC said.
- Cover your coughs/sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue away immediately after use. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your shirt, sleeve, or elbow.
- Keep your hands away from your nose, mouth and eyes. Now would be a good time to take a break from chewing tobacco, smoking and vaping.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

Resiliency:

Research has shown stress reduction is important to maintaining a healthy immune system. Increases in psychological, social, and spiritual stress can occur with disruptions to one's life and routine, social isolation, and interpreting the meaning of current events. Stigma towards distinct groups and constant exposure to the media due to COVID-19 concerns can also increase stress, thus weakening the immune system. Maintaining mental, social, and spiritual fitness can decrease stress as follows:

- Mental: Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news media coverage, particularly social media.
- Make time in your daily routine to unwind, doing activities you enjoy. If those aren't available due to restrictions, modify those activities or consider choosing a new activity.
- Social: Social distancing does not mean social isolation. Be intentional about maintaining connections with family, friends, and fellow Marines.
- Spiritual: Practice Grace. Marines can be hard on themselves, especially when restrictions make it difficult to accomplish the mission. Be easy on yourselves and each other. Engaging in new or existing spiritual or religious practices can also aid in relieving stress.

If you find yourself or witness another trending past the limits of your resiliency, do not hesitate to utilize all resources and the chain of command. Marines take care of each other!

<https://www.apa.org/research/action/immune>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/reducing-stigma.html>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044464>

For any other concerns or questions you have about physical fitness please contact our team at

TECOM@forcefitness.usmc.mil

S.P. Armes