

Chronic Pain and Illness + COVID-19

A Kairos Chronic Pain Coaching Webinar Event
with
Christina H Chororos
July 2020



Before We Get Started: A Few Housekeeping Items

Medical Advice Disclaimer:

Though I have a degree in education, hold an Integrative Wellness Life Coaching Certification, and obtained a Graduate Certificate in Pain Management from the University of Connecticut, I am NOT a physician. Therefore, this content is NOT intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment. The information shared today is based on the most current publicly available information we have about COVID-19 and chronic pain and illness. Always seek the advice of your physician regarding questions or changes to your current treatment plan.

Before We Get Started: A Few Housekeeping Items C'tnd

All stats and facts will be cited in the comments at the end of the presentation. Kairos Chronic Pain Coaching is committed to fact-checking so not to spread misinformation regarding any of the health matters discussed. COVID-19 is an emerging disease that we are still learning about. Therefore, any updates will be noted on our website and this webinar as they become available.

Additionally, the information provided here regarding SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 is NOT based on politics. All facts shared are based on science and medicine.

Before We Get Started: A Few Housekeeping Items C'tnd

I will save 15-minutes at the end of the presentation to answer questions.

If you would like to watch/listen to the webinar again it will be posted on our website @ www.kairoschronicpain.com

I usually have someone helping to moderate and answer the chat but this evening, I do not – so please be patient with me! I will do my best to check the chat and any questions asked will be answered at the end during our Q+A.

Finally, please remember to mute yourself!

Today's Agenda:

I. Welcome

II. Housekeeping Items

III. Introductions

IV. What We DO Know About COVID-19

V. Chronic Illness + COVID-19 Similarities

VI. Challenges With Chronic Illness During the COVID-19 Crisis

VII. Tips + Tricks for Chronic Illness + COVID-19

VIII. Q+A

IX. Wrap Up

Introductions:

My name is Christina H Chororos – Founder of Kairos Chronic Pain Coaching, LLC - I am also a 12-year chronic pain and illness sufferer, educator, speaker and writer.

In 2008, I was diagnosed with deep infiltrating endometriosis

My physical, mental and emotional health all suffered at the hand of chronic pain - a disease that affects 116 million U.S. adults—more than the number affected by heart disease, diabetes, and cancer combined. (1)

Finally, after years of failed western and eastern treatment protocols, I decided to attend a 30-day, in-patient chronic pain recovery program. Eventually, I was able to find a successful formula that allowed me to take my life back from chronic pain and illness. My pain wasn't gone, but it was managed.

And so I went on to establish Kairos Chronic Pain Coaching

To read more about my story and credentials, you can visit our website @ www.kairoschronicpain.com/meet-christina-h-chororos

What DO We Know About COVID-19: What's In a Name?

Since the emergence of the novel coronavirus infection in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 (2), we have heard several names used to refer to the virus and disease.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) viruses and the diseases they cause often have different names. For example, HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. (3)

Viruses are named by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV). Diseases are named to enable discussion on disease prevention, spread, transmissibility, severity and treatment. Human disease preparedness and response is WHO's role, so diseases are officially named by WHO in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). (3)

What DO We Know About COVID-19: What's In a Name? C'tnd

Therefore, *the virus that causes the disease is named, **severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 or SARS-CoV-2.** The disease is named, **coronavirus disease or COVID-19.***
(5)

COVID-19: (previously known as “2019 novel coronavirus”)

“CO” stands for corona

“VI” stands for virus

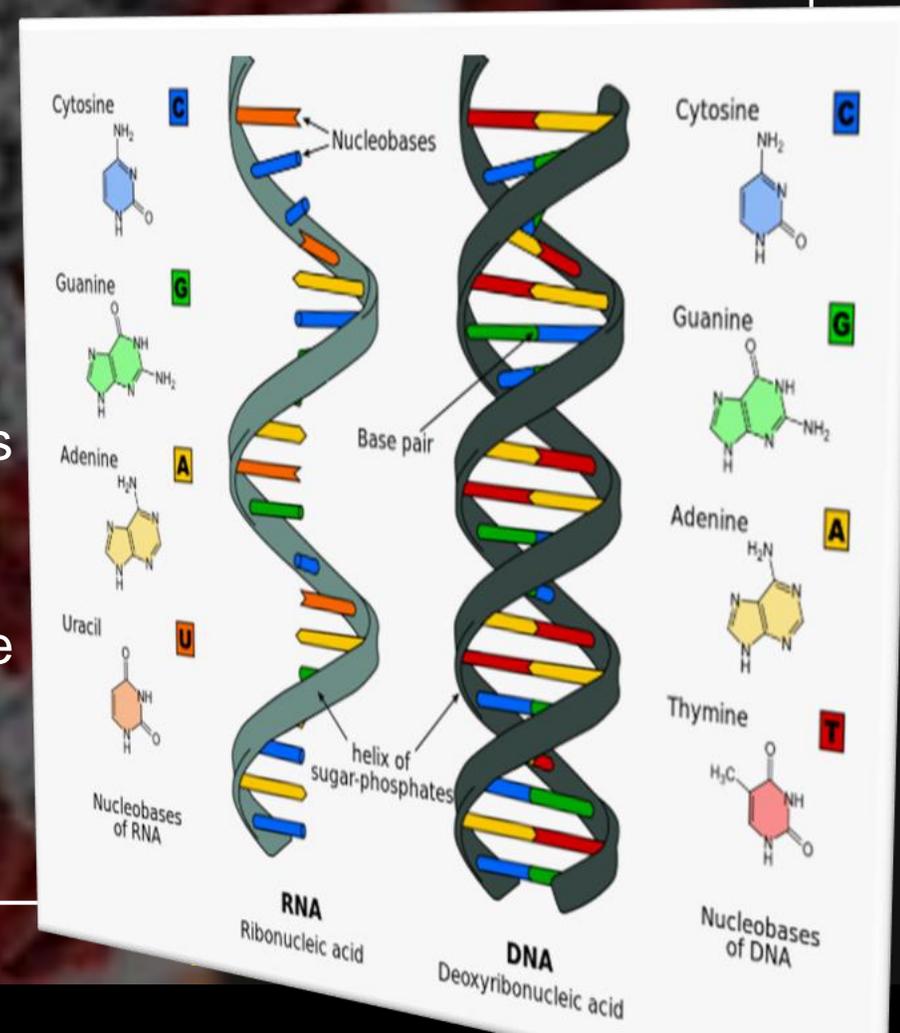
“D” stands for disease

19 – 2019 (4)

What DO We Know About COVID-19: RNA Virus

Viruses are small particles of genetic material (either DNA or RNA) that are surrounded by a protein coat. Viruses are incapable of reproducing on their own. They depend on the organisms they infect (hosts) for their very survival. (6)

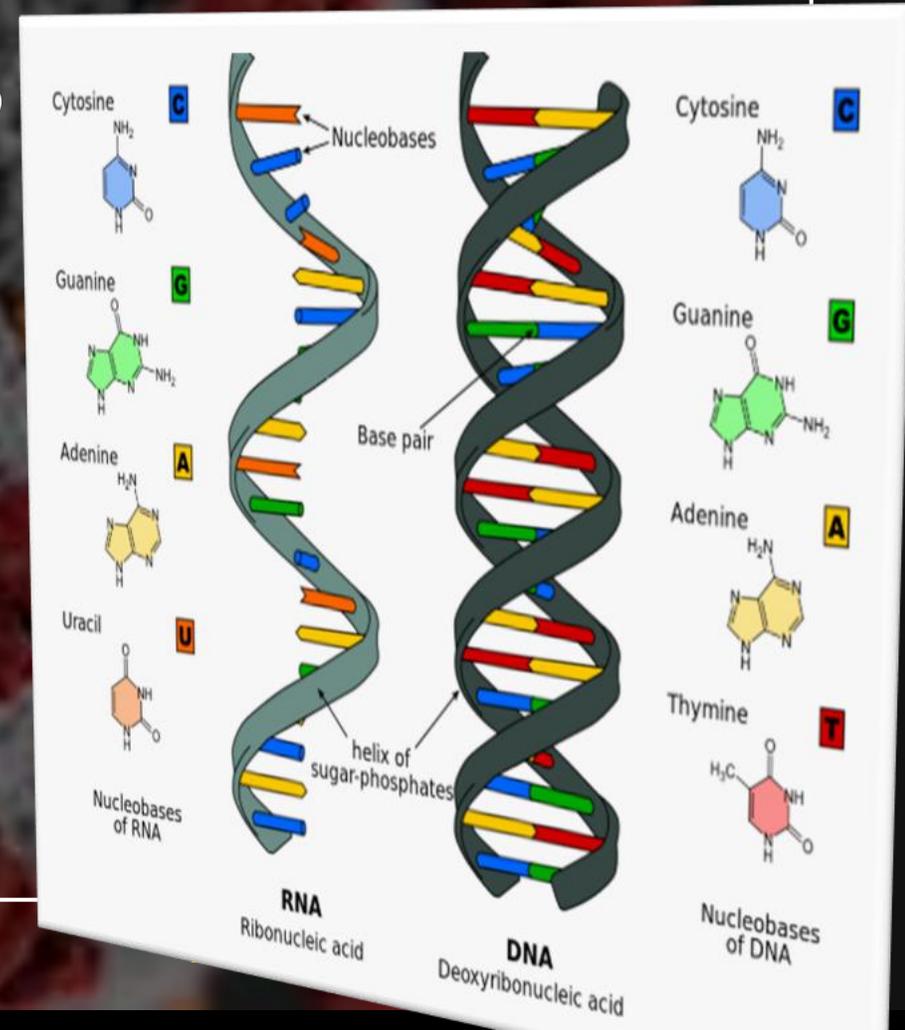
SARS-CoV-2 is an RNA Virus. An RNA virus is a virus that has RNA, rather than DNA, as its genetic material. RNA (ribonucleic acid) are single-stranded nucleic acid that carries out the instructions coded in DNA. In other words, in mammals, such as humans, DNA contains genetic instructions that are transcribed—or copied—into RNA. While DNA remains in the cell's nucleus, RNA carries the copies of genetic information to the rest of the cell. (7)



What DO We Know About COVID-19: RNA Virus C'tnd

Viral replication is the process by which virus particles make new copies of themselves within a host cell. Those copies then can go on to infect other cells. The goal of the virus is to replicate itself (8)

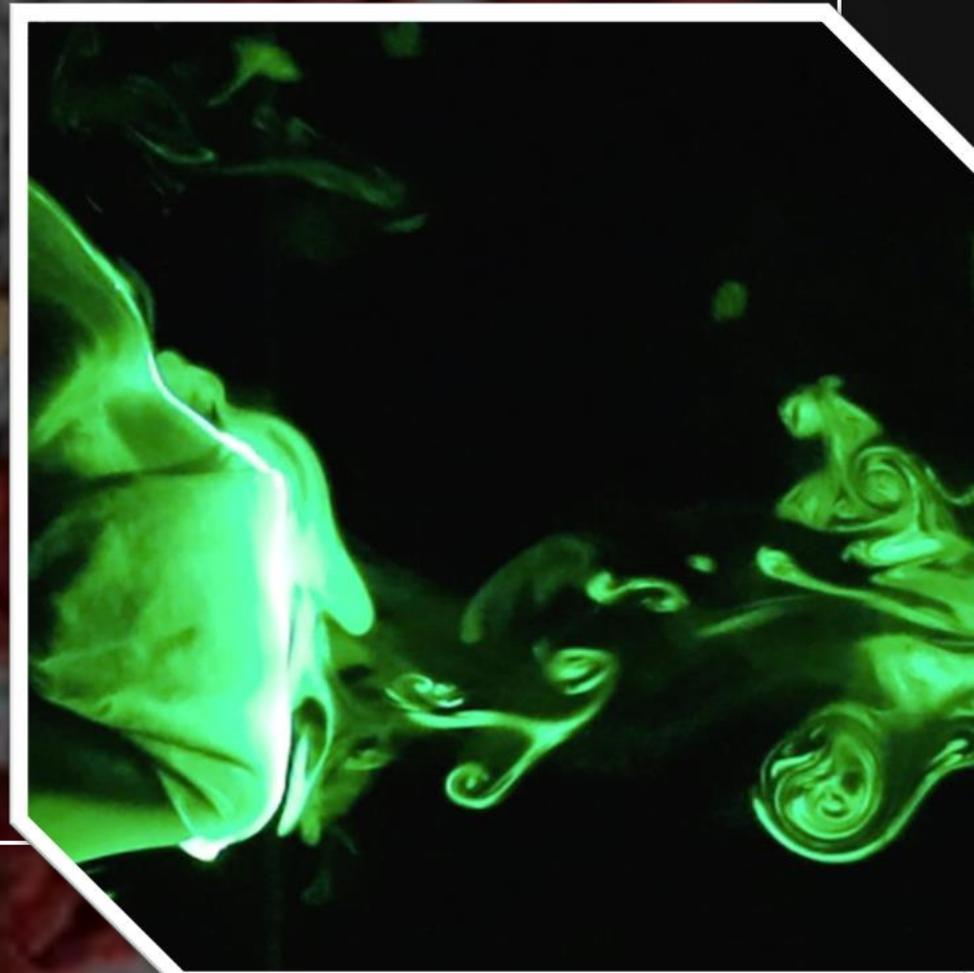
SARS-CoV-2 enters the body through the nose, mouth, or eyes and attaches to our cells. Once the virus is inside our cells, it releases its RNA. Our hijacked cells serve as virus factories, reading the virus's RNA and making long viral proteins to compromise the immune system. The virus assembles new copies of itself and spreads to more parts of the body and—by way of saliva, sweat, and other bodily fluids—to other humans. (9)



What DO We Know About COVID-19: How Is COVID-19 Transmitted? Droplets, Aerosols or Both?

According to the CDC, SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is thought to spread mainly from person to person predominately through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly inhaled into the lungs.

HOWEVER, JAMA (The Journal of the American Medical Association), a peer-reviewed medical journal published by the American Medical Association, recently released an article discussing “Theoretical Considerations and Available Evidence” regarding the long-standing debate about the extent to which common respiratory viruses, including SARS-CoV-2 are transmitted via respiratory droplets vs. aerosols.(10)



What DO We Know About COVID-19: How Is COVID-19 Transmitted? Why This Matters

Droplets are classically described as larger entities that rapidly drop to the ground by force of gravity, typically 3-6 feet of the source person, hence, the 6-foot social distancing guidelines. (10)

Aerosols are smaller particles that rapidly evaporate in the air, leaving behind droplet nuclei that are small enough and light enough to remain suspended in the air for hours (think aerosol air-fresheners). (10)

Determining whether droplets or aerosols predominate in the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 has critical implications – if SARS-CoV-2 is spread primarily through respiratory droplets, face masks and socially distancing 6-feet apart should be adequate. However, if SARS-CoV-2 is carried by aerosols that can remain suspended in the air for prolonged periods, medical masks and socially distancing 6-feet apart would only provide partial protection. (10)

What DO We Know About COVID-19: How Is COVID-19 Transmitted? Why This Matters C'tnd

Investigators have demonstrated that speaking and coughing produce a mixture of BOTH droplets and aerosols in a range of sizes and that these secretions can:

- travel together for up to 27-feet
- feasibly remain in the air and viable for hours (meaning SARS-CoV-2)

Additionally:

- SARS-CoV-2 RNA be recovered from air samples in hospitals and,
- poor ventilation prolongs the amount of time that aerosols remain airborne (10)

This is NOT to deter you from wearing a mask, keeping excellent hygiene and social distance – it's to do the exact opposite. If SARS-CoV-2 IS transmitted through aerosols, taking these precautions and MORE is 100% imperative.

What DO We Know About COVID-19: Who Is Most At Risk?

According to the CDC, people of any age with the following conditions **are at increased risk** of severe illness from COVID-19:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes

What DO We Know About COVID-19: Who Is Most At Risk? C'tnd

According to the CDC, based on what we know at this time, people with the following conditions **might** be at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- Liver disease
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Smoking
- Type 1 diabetes

What DO We Know About COVID-19: Who Is Most At Risk? C'tnd

Though the CDC has released who may be at higher risk to contract COVID-19, the truth is, COVID-19 doesn't spare anyone. Babies, children, teens, young adults, adults in their 30-50's and the elderly have all been affected by COVID-19.

Recently, 85 babies under 1-year old in a Texas County tested positive for COVID-19 and a baby boy, younger than 6 months old, tested positive for COVID-19 and died. With that said officials say the child was "brought to the hospital with unrelated symptoms and tested for COVID-19 while at the hospital." The child later died at home, and an autopsy is being conducted to determine the cause of death.(11)

People who contract COVID-19 can sometimes have a mild illness, or sometimes no symptoms at all. But others develop respiratory failure that requires oxygen support or even a ventilator to help them recover. It's clear that this happens more often in men than in women, as well as in people who are older (65+) or who have chronic health conditions. (12)

What DO We Know About COVID-19: Emerging Data/Information

While children have been less affected by COVID-19 compared to adults, children with certain conditions may be at increased risk for severe illness. Children who are medically complex, who have serious genetic, neurologic, metabolic disorders, and with congenital (since birth) heart disease might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Similar to adults, children with obesity, diabetes, asthma and chronic lung disease, or immunosuppression might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

The CDC is investigating a rare but serious complication associated with COVID-19 in children called Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C). We do not yet know what causes MIS-C and who is at increased risk for developing it. (13)

Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs. Children with MIS-C may have a fever and various symptoms, including abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, neck pain, rash, bloodshot eyes, or feeling extra tired. However, many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes COVID-19, or had been around someone with COVID-19. (13)

What DO We Know About COVID-19: Emerging Data/Information

A new study suggests that part of the answer to this question may be found in the genes that each one of us carries. While more research is needed to pinpoint the precise underlying genes and mechanisms responsible, a recent genome-wide association (GWAS) study, just published in the New England Journal of Medicine, finds that gene variants in two regions of the human genome are associated with severe COVID-19 and correspondingly carry a greater risk of COVID-19-related death. (14)

The two stretches of DNA implicated as harboring risks for severe COVID-19 include one that determines blood type and others that play various roles in the immune system. In fact, the findings suggest that **people with blood type A face a 50 percent greater risk** of needing oxygen support or a ventilator should they become infected with the novel coronavirus. In contrast, **people with blood type O appear to have about a 50 percent reduced risk** of severe COVID-19. (14)



What DO We Know About COVID-19: Emerging Data/Information

In the July 20, 2020 edition of CNN's Coronavirus: Fact vs. Fiction newsletter, COVID-19 survivors are discovering scary long-term effects of the disease. These have included:

Brain fog + short-term memory problems – What is now being referred to as “COVID brain”

Chronic fatigue

Breathlessness and,

Muscle pain (15)

Research now indicates that COVID-19 is a multisystem disease that can damage not only the lungs, but the kidneys, liver, heart, brain, nervous system, skin and gastrointestinal tract. (15)

In Europe, where the peak of COVID-19 has now passed, thousands of people say they are far from fully recovered. (15)



Chronic Pain and Illness + COVID-19 Similarities

COVID-19 Has Caused People To: Chronic Illness Causes People To:

- Suffer from pain and illness
- Endure fear and anxiety
- Be unable to work/ financially struggle
- Have relationship problems and/or stress
- Grapple with mental health issues like, depression
- Be isolated from family and friends
- Potentially suffer from chronic pain and/or chronic illness

- Suffer from pain and illness
- Endure fear and anxiety
- Be unable to work/ financially struggle
- Have relationship problems and/or stress
- Grapple with mental health issues like, depression
- Be isolated from family and friends
- Suffer from chronic pain and/or chronic illness

Challenges With Chronic Pain and Illness During the COVID-19 Crisis

Isolation

Doctor appointments/telehealth adjustments

Medication shortages

Worsening depression, anxiety/mental health issues

Added relationship/primary informal caretaker problems

Continuous childcare

Increased housework

Additional stress

Financial problems and/or unemployment

Worsening insomnia/ "painsomnia"

Self-management coping skills needed now more than ever

Challenges With Chronic Pain and Illness During the COVID-19 Crisis C'tnd

Opioid use can cause respiratory depression – and so does COVID-19. Therefore, while all people should be taking precautions to prevent exposure to COVID-19, this is particularly critical for higher risk groups, including people who use opioids. (16)

People recovering from addiction now face new challenges. Physical distancing measures, while critical to COVID-19 mitigation, eliminate the important element of social support needed for addiction recovery. Additionally, people with opioid use disorder may face barriers to obtaining maintenance medications (i.e., buprenorphine or methadone) or obtaining services from syringe service programs. (16)

Tips + Tricks for Chronic Illness + COVID-19

Dan Levy, the creator of “Schitt’s Creek” recently said: “I suppose, in a way, I can understand the frustration of being told what to do [regarding wearing a mask], which is why I would like to propose a reframing of this whole thing. Imagine seeing it [wearing a mask] not as an infringement on your freedom, but rather the simplest, easiest act of kindness that you can do in a day.” Well said, eh? 😊

Wearing a mask is paramount. AND having those around you wear masks is paramount.

Health is NOT political therefore, you are ALLOWED to be cautious, you are ALLOWED to politely ask someone to wear a mask around you, you are ALLOWED to not feel comfortable having someone over or seeing someone, you are ALLOWED to set the boundaries that you need to in order to protect yourself and your family. Period. Chronic pain and illness sufferers are often labeled as “alarmists” – we’re not – we just simply understand how difficult health issues are and we want to prevent ourselves from having to grapple with additional health problems.

Tips + Tricks for Chronic Illness + COVID-19 C'tnd

"Outside is better than inside," but "no crowd is better than crowd," and "crowd is better than big crowd." – Dr. Anthony Fauci

Know Your Treatment Plan:

As chronic pain and illness sufferers we have added anxieties about what this pandemic means for the treatment of our illness. Get in touch with your medical team or individual physicians and discuss concerns like how you will attend your appointments (telehealth or in-person), pausing certain medications that suppress your immune system, and what advice they have for potentially sheltering in place for an extended period of time.

Learn, Develop and Practice Coping Skills:

No one teaches us how to be sick. Fortunately or unfortunately, whatever coping skills we had before we got sick, are the coping skills we use while we are sick. This was the entire reason I established KCPC – to help teach chronic pain and illness sufferers how to cope with their illnesses. We can dedicate an entire webinar to coping strategies but mindfulness, meditation, reframing, using humor, deep breathing exercises or gratitude journals are a great start.

Tips + Tricks for Chronic Illness + COVID-19 C'tnd

Prescriptions:

If you have multiple RX's (like me) – first call ahead to ensure the pharmacy has your scripts readily available. Unfortunately, COVID has caused some medication shortages throughout the country. Therefore, speak to your physicians and pharmacists about this concern.

Additionally, if you have several medications that you take see if it's possible to get your medications on somewhat of a close schedule so that you can limit your trips to the pharmacy and therefore limit exposure.

Groceries + Errands:

Remember ventilation is key – especially if SARS-CoV-2 is spread via aerosols. You want to try and avoid being inside a building with other people as much as possible. Not only are supermarket chains doing online grocery orders and deliveries, but in several communities, you can now find people who are “professional shoppers” so that you can limit your exposure.

Tips + Tricks for Chronic Illness + COVID-19

Managing Stress:

We know that stress makes pain, illness and insomnia worse. Therefore, find an outlet for your stress on a daily basis. A lot of us don't have the luxury of exercise as an outlet but try things like hot baths, short walks, yoga, connecting to spirit (God, The Universe, etc.), sitting outside in the sun, journaling or taking up a new hobby.

Don't Further Isolate Yourself:

Remember, EVERYONE is having a difficult time with this pandemic in one way or another. Stay connected with friends and family as much as possible. Join online communities. Kairos Chronic Pain Coaching has a brand new Facebook group! Furthermore, in the next few weeks we will be offering a "COVID Crisis Chronic Illness Community" to provide additional support for the chronic illness community.

Create a schedule:

These last few months have been difficult because so much is unknown and so much is out of order. Create a schedule – when you shower, relax, have meals, etc. No matter how trivial it may seem, it will truly help your mental health to have structure.

Q + A



For more information on
Kairos Chronic Pain Coaching, how to work
with Christina, or any of the topics
discussed this evening, please visit our
website @ kairoschronicpain.com
or visit us on social media!

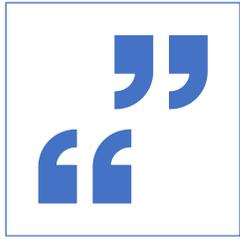
Thank you for
attending!





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