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## About:

Yvette Mier, BSN / RN / CWON, is a well-respected nurse with over 25 years of experience in wound care. She is a chapter author in the Wound, Ostomy, Continence Nursing Society textbook, Core Curriculum for Wound Management. She presents regularly at national wound care conferences and is passionate about leg. She lives works in the Atlanta area. When not directing clinical care in an outpatient wound center, she can frequently be found in local parks walking with her husband and their dogs.

## Taking Charge of your Health During a Pandemic

Most of us would like to pull the covers over our head and have someone wake us when the coronavirus pandemic is over. The constant news updates, social media bursts and even conversations with family and friends can make anyone uneasy or even fearful. It is understandable to feel overwhelmed.

I challenge everyone to shift their thinking toward ways to protect your own health to lessen the risk that you will have medical emergency while our health care systems are overwhelmed with the coronavirus. For many of us, this means controlling what we can control. Our intentional physical and mental health practices have a direct impact on our overall health. A healthy body and mind have a stronger immune system to fight the corona virus; it's that simple.

If you have chronic health disease such as diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease, chronic blood clots or congestive heart failure, follow your prescribed physician protocols for medication, nutrition and exercise. Over 50% of patients with chronic disease neither take their medications as prescribed nor follow physician advice for diet and exercise.

If you have chronic venous disease, chronic edema or if you have been told you are at risk for these problems due to genetics, medical history of blood clots / DVT (deep vein thrombosis), lifestyle or body habitus, it is important to maintain your leg health. Wearing your prescribed compression garments, walking 30-60 minutes daily, foot pump exercises, and elevating legs above the heart for 30 minutes 3 times daily is imperative to prevent complications associated with venous disease. Uncontrolled edema in lower legs places you at risk for new or recurrent blood clots, skin infection known as cellulitis or spontaneous ulcers known as venous ulcers.

As a community, a nation and a world, we must support each other during this pandemic. We may not be able to physically come within 6 feet of each other due to the need for "social distancing", but we can still communicate and be there for each other. Human connection is a basic need for mental health. Frequent phone calls, text messages, social media, video conferencing, email or even the old-fashioned written letter are all great ways to maintain family, friend and community relationships. I encourage you to balance your communications about the coronavirus pandemic with some shared laughs, movie or book recommendations and maybe most importantly positive encouragement about what you are doing to promote your own health and immune system with the hopes that you will encourage someone else to do the same.

**We're all in this together; let's all do our best to stay healthy together!**

## References

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