

Health and Wellbeing

Priorities

Your health, safety, and well-being are our top priorities.

No project, paper, grant or collaboration exists that is more important than you. Graduate students and postdocs are exposed to a plethora of stress factors, resulting in consequences that can be mild to extremely severe. Quoting from the article [Graduate School Can Have Terrible Effects on People's Mental Health](#):

The doctoral-degree experience often consists of intense labor expectations for little pay and a resulting lack of sleep and social life. In addition, there is the notorious hierarchy of academia, which often promotes power struggles and tribalism.... Graduate students are disproportionately likely to struggle with mental-health issues. The researchers surveyed roughly 500 economics Ph.D. candidates at eight elite universities, and found that 18 percent of them experienced moderate or severe symptoms of depression and anxiety. That's more than three times the national average, according to the study.

If you feel you may be facing mental health challenges, don't worry that your problems are too minor or feel ashamed – you're not alone!

Staying healthy

With this in mind, **our group strives to do everything possible to support lab members** and ensure a healthy work-life balance. The vacation and workload expectations defined in [Roles and Responsibilities](#) are a big part of this. Some other tips, based on experience, are the following:

1. Maintain a healthy sleep schedule.
2. Pursue interests and hobbies outside of your work. These help relieve stress. They also benefit your research! Stepping away from your problem and letting your mind wander elsewhere is, counterintuitively, a great way to stimulate creative thought.
3. Develop a support network among your peers. They understand the struggle!
4. Use mental health resources! Seeking help with your mental hygiene and wellness is a (well-deserved!) investment in yourself.
5. Advocate for your needs with the group, and with the Rice community more broadly. We care!

Important

If you or someone you know may be considering suicide, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Keeping each other healthy

1. Do not come into the lab if you are sick. Stay home and get healthy, and don't risk getting others sick.
- 2.

Campus resources

Providing moral support and guidance is part of James's job as group leader (meaning that you should not hesitate to ask for moral support or guidance!) but he is not a trained psychologist or counselor. Fortunately Rice offers free mental wellness services:

- the [Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center](#) provides a first point of contact for students who want to talk to someone about solutions to their wellbeing concerns
- the [Rice Counseling Center](#) offers free, confidential support