

TOI HAUORA KŌRERO O TE WĀ

Māori models of health and wellbeing to elevate mauri

The initial public health response to COVID-19 focussing on tinana (physical health) might make us feel temporarily out of balance. Using a **Māori model of health and wellbeing**, such as Te Whare Tapa Whā, can help us to consider our whole being. This includes our taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing), taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing), and taha whānau (social wellbeing).

Central to wellbeing from a Māori worldview is the concept of mauri (vitality). Different states of mauri can help to explain different levels of wellbeing. For example, mauri noho (languishing); mauri rere (unsettled), mauri oho (activated); mauri tau (in balance), mauri ora (flourishing).

Mauri noho – Self-isolation might affect taha whānau and make us feel separated and vulnerable. Maintain connection with others - by phone and online. Young children still need physical contact and attention. Our kaumatua, those with compromised immunity and pre-existing conditions, and single parents also need our help and connection.

Mauri rere – the rapid change surrounding the virus might affect taha hinengaro and make us feel overwhelmed. This might present as a lack of appetite, feeling tired, irrational, emotional, stressed, anxious, worried, scared, or vivid dreams. Children often feel anxiety in their puku and may complain of a sore puku or a sore head, withdraw, act 'babyish', be clingy, or wet the bed. Reduce exposure to non-urgent updates about the virus. Acknowledge feelings. Emphasise proactive measures such as washing hands, surfaces, physical distancing and isolation. Maintain routine. Do what brings you happiness such as waiata, kanikani.

Mauri oho – We have been planning and preparing to reduce the spread of the virus in Aotearoa. This hyper-awareness will lessen as we settle into isolation and follow public health and civil defence protocol. While we initially expect the number of cases of the virus confirmed to increase exponentially and for it to be transmitted in the community, our immediate action will lessen the spread and impact long-term.

Mauri tau – The learning from previous crises such as the 1918 influenza and the Christchurch earthquake, as well as learning from other countries responses means that we are well informed, well prepared and proactive in our response to the virus.

Mauri ora – Māori models of health and wellbeing help us to focus on balance in order to flourish and be well. The [5 ways to wellbeing](#) can also help to achieve mauri ora.

1. [Connect with others](#) - by phone and online.
2. [Give](#) - patience, understanding, reassurance, help.
3. [Take notice](#) - of your feelings and actions, write it down, talk about it, seek help.
4. [Keep learning](#) – about resiliency.
5. [Be active](#) – Get outside for fresh air and to be in nature.

We will consider how the focus on the respiratory symptoms of COVID-19 can be understood through our connection with Tāwhirimātea, atua of hau, and how to maintain balance in our hauora in our upcoming Toi Hauora Kōrero o te wā.

Resources about keeping well

Government website about COVID-19 <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

Ministry of Health mental wellbeing during COVID-19 <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-taking-care-your-mental-wellbeing>

Mental Health Foundation mental wellbeing during COVID-19 including 5 ways to wellbeing also available in te reo <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/>

Tāne ora Māori men's health including an explanation of Te Whare Tapa Whā and descriptions of each taha <https://www.maorimenshealth.co.nz/te-whare-tapa-wha-health-whare/taha-hinengaro-mental-health/#>

