In the month of September, over 300,000 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in the United States.

People across the nation are dealing with sudden changes to their social lives and daily routines.

Americans should be taking care of their mental health this winter during the COVID-19 pandemic, as isolation can affect it negatively.

While people were quarantining at home during the summer due to COVID-19, they were not prepared or well-equipped to take care of their mental health.

The CDC uncovered daunting statistics related to the affect of COVID-19 and isolation on individuals’ mental health. Of 6,000 adults surveyed, over 40% of those surveyed said they had experienced a mental or behavioral health condition related to the coronavirus epidemic. Overall, 25.5% of respondents said they had experienced symptoms of anxiety disorder, while 24.3% said they had experienced symptoms of depression. Further, the researchers found that 10.7% of all respondents said they had considered suicide at some point during the 30 days leading up to the survey. This is a stark increase compared to people surveyed this time last year.

There are many different activities that people can pick up that have positive affects on mental health, and do not contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

While you are outside, you are less likely to spread the virus from person to person because the airflow is constantly moving. Coming into close contact with people who don't live with you increases your risk of being exposed to someone infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. According to the Mayo Clinic, there are a handful of activities that you can pick up that have positive affects on people’s mental health without spreading COVID-19. These activities include,

* Walking, running and hiking
* Rollerblading and biking
* Fishing and hunting
* Golfing
* Kayaking, boating and sailing
* Fitness classes, held outside, that allow distance

If you are looking for safe activities to do indoors, arts and crafts are recommended. Any activities that stimulate your mind are good for your mental health. During the winter season, preparation for isolation is a bit different as there are fewer activities to do outside. Activities like biking outside can be supplemented by an indoor bike. Instead of walking outside, you might decide to try using the treadmill.

While COVID-19 is still prevalent in our society, there are ways that we can continue our usual routine and preserve our mental health.

The CDC has deemed it safe to go to work and to go to school by abiding by the necessary precautions. If your work is not allowing people to come in, tele working is a fine alternative. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, large numbers of people should not be in the same work environment, and only essential staff should be working in the facilities. To ensure a safe work environment, and make sure that people can live their regular lives, certain precautions must be taken. There should be new procedures for sanitizing and disinfecting, sick employees should stay home, and additional signage should be added so people do not forget the new procedures. For people who are able to go to work, or attend school, they should assume these activities at their soonest convenience. People should only be attending these things if special precautions have been taken and there is a heightened level of safety around the virus.

In the month of September, over 300,000 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in the United States. This has led to many changes in the lifestyle of Americans. As we’ve seen in the summer, the affect of COVID-19 on our mental health is devastating. The amount of people with anxiety disorders, depression, and suicidal thoughts, more than doubled because of the virus. People should be conscious about their mental health and engage in activities that have a positive effect on their well being. The list of activities to engage in during COVID-19 is lengthy, and people should take full advantage. The activities that are most highly recommended include the ones that allow people to be outside and have plenty of space to themselves. If you do feel sick, make sure that you are getting help and do not risk contaminating other people. Be sure to check on your friends that might be going through a hard time in their lives or struggling with their mental health, please call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for a dangerous mental health emergency.