



College can be tough. To help you manage the highs and lows, FAACT's Behavioral Health Resource Center can help you navigate the psychological and social challenges of college life with food allergies.

**NOTE FOR PARENTS:** These resources can be helpful to you as well. We encourage you to focus on self-care and your own well-being as you support your child's new chapter in life.

## Maintaining Your Mental Health in a New Environment

Academic and social success starts with mental success. We have some resources that can help you create a mental health toolbox that is completely your own. What restores you mentally is different for every person. Over time, you will find what works for YOU. Taking care of yourself must be a priority in college because more things will be vying for your attention – new friends, tougher classes, parties, love interests, Greek life, sports and social clubs. Without taking time for yourself, it's easy to burn out.

Think of yourself as a pitcher of water. The more water you pour into other cups, the emptier you become. You must replenish your water before you can start filling other cups again. To replenish yourself, you might go for a jog, paint a canvas, take some photos, create a refreshing morning routine, go out to the movies, or something completely different. Your "toolbox" might include a phone call to your parents or best friend, your favorite allergen-free snack, or a relaxing evening of video games. Or it could be a combination of a lot of things! College is a time for self-exploration. As you explore your interests, what you want to do, and who you want to be, take some time to explore what fills your pitcher back up so you do not have to live life parched. Over time, you will come up with a set of tools that work for you!

## Creating Your Toolkit

FAACT's online [Behavioral Health Resources Center](#) is packed with information on self-care and taking care of your mental health. These resources are designed for the food allergy community, focusing on stress, anxiety, and meeting challenges.

Use these resources as you build your own mental health tool kit.

- ❑ [Navigating a New Diagnosis](#): A food allergy diagnosis can leave you feeling angry, sad, overwhelmed, or anxious. We have tips to help you deal with these feelings.
- ❑ [Food Allergy Podcasts](#): Roundtable discussions with food allergy experts cover a wide range of topics, from the latest research to talking about mental health so family members will listen.
- ❑ [Self-care](#): You'll find self-care tips for you as well as lists designed for families and caregivers.
- ❑ [Coping Skills](#): These tools are also designed for teens as well as families and caregivers.
- ❑ [Anxiety and Depression](#): Learn the signs of anxiety and depression, ways to cope with PTSD and disordered eating, and when to ask for help.
- ❑ [Resilience and Food Allergies](#): The ability to bounce back after tough times can be learned! We'll help you get started.