

Healthy Ways to Deal with Anxiety



It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry when dealing with uncertainty. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and respond to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family.

Take the following steps to help you cope:

- **Take care of your body:** Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep. Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Learn more about wellness strategies for mental health.
- **Connect with others:** Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships and build a strong support system. This can be accomplished virtually, should it be necessary or preferred.
- **Take breaks:** Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Remember to take deep breaths, and try to do activities you enjoy.
- **Stay informed:** When you feel that you are missing information, you may become more stressed or nervous. Watch, listen to, or read the news for updates from officials. Be aware that there may be rumors during a crisis, especially on social media.
- **Avoid too much exposure to news:** Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly. Try to do enjoyable activities and return to normal life as much as possible and check for updates between breaks.
- **Seek help when needed:** If distress impacts activities of your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, or doctor.

Resources:

Center for Disease Control, "What You Should Know" Coronavirus page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

WA State Department of Health Coronavirus Information: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

Adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Taking Care of Your Emotional Health, retrieved on 2/19/2020 from <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

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