



Coping with Stress due to COVID-19

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. Additional information can be found at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [website](#).

Things you can do to support yourself

- Stay up to date about developments related to COVID-19 by using reliable and accurate sources of health-related information, such as the CDC and BPHC.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic constantly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.
- Focus on positive aspects of your life and things that you can control.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Reduce stress in yourself and others

Sharing the facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful. When you share accurate information about COVID-19 you can help make people feel less stressed and allow you to connect with them.

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others call:

- 911
- Call or text Samaritans Inc. 24/7 at (877) 870-HOPE
- Call your health care provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

For more information on how to cope with stress, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>.

