

Managing your anxiety about Coronavirus (COVID-19)



The international prevalence and ongoing nature of coronavirus together with speculation that it could become a more serious illness can be anxiety producing. You can begin to prepare now by taking the following steps to manage your anxiety and maintain a positive outlook.

What you can do

Keep things in perspective. Government officials are preparing for possible worst-case scenarios in order to protect the public. The public, however, does not need to expect the worst. The majority of those who have contracted coronavirus have recovered. (See statistics [here](#)).

Get the facts. Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as news from [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or a local and/or state public health agency. Be wary of unsubstantiated rumors, which can be upsetting.

Maintain a hopeful outlook. Public health agencies around the globe are working to identify outbreaks of the illness and to ensure the availability of the best medical care to those who are sick. Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to sensationalized media coverage.

Stay healthy. A healthy lifestyle — including proper diet, exercise and rest — is your best defense against any disease threat. Adopting hygienic habits such as washing your hands regularly, avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and maintaining a distance of at least 3 feet between yourself and anyone coughing, or sneezing will also minimize your exposure to all types of germs and disease sources. A healthy body can have a positive impact on your thoughts and emotions, enabling you to make better decisions and deal with the viruses' uncertainties.

Build resilience. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, threats or significant sources of stress. Draw on skills you have used in the past that have helped you to manage life's adversities and use those skills to help you manage concerns about a virus pandemic.

Have a plan. Think about how you might respond if the virus were discovered in your area. You may want to stock up on nonperishable foods in case officials recommend staying home, consider options for working from home, caring for sick family members, and establish an emergency family communication plan. Explore how you might spend your time if schools or businesses are closed. Planning some of these scenarios in advance can lessen your anxiety.

Keep connected. Maintaining social networks can foster a sense of normality and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress. If officials have recommended limiting your social contact to contain an outbreak, you can stay connected via social media sites, email and telephone.

Seek additional help. If you have intense feelings of anxiety or hopelessness or are having trouble performing your job or other daily activities, a mental health professional can help you develop an appropriate strategy for moving forward. Call your EAP to speak with a counselor and learn about ways you can have virtual appointments if needed.

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