

Mental Health Tips

It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during this time of uncertainty and social distancing. Everyone reacts differently, and even your own feelings will change over time. Self-care will help your long-term healing.

Certain groups of people may respond more strongly to the stress of this crisis, including: older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19; children and teens; people who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders; people who have mental health conditions.

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear
- Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes
- Anger or short-temper

Things you can do to support yourself:

- **Take care of your body**– Do some deep breathing exercises, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep. Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- **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.
- **Take breaks**– Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Try taking in deep breaths or doing activities you usually enjoy.
- **Avoid too much exposure to news**– It can be upsetting to hear about the pandemic repeatedly. Schedule a time each day when you will check your trusted resources for updates.
- **Check trustworthy resources** – Be aware that there may be false information, especially on social media. Make sure to get information regarding the pandemic from trusted resources such as the CDC and local government authorities.



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