

How to Manage Stress and Anxiety from Coronavirus (COVID-19)

As COVID-19 continues to spread, stress and anxiety surrounding the situation also continue to rise. While fear and anxiety are natural and completely normal emotions to experience, there's no reason that fear over the coronavirus should completely consume your life.

Overcoming the Fear of the Unknown

We are programmed to plan and feel much more comfortable even with the illusion of control. Fear of the unknown is what makes people anxious and this is especially true in today's climate with concerns about coronavirus growing.

The unknown makes people uneasy because they feel like they cannot plan accordingly and, in an effort to take control of a situation, people may start to overreact. This can cause people to go overboard, like in cases where we're seeing hoarding of food, toilet paper, cleaning supplies and water. These actions are simply anxieties fueled by fear and misinformation and unfortunately, the unknowns around coronavirus are not something we can change right now, but we are continuing to learn more each day.

However, there are things you can do to alleviate your fears and anxieties surrounding the virus.

1. Arm yourself with facts from reliable sources. The best sources for accurate, trusted information are:
[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
[The NJ Department of Health](#)
Your doctor and trusted healthcare professionals
2. If your stress and anxiety become overwhelming, reach out to [One Source EAP](#) at (800) 300-0628. A One Source counselor can help you sort through your feelings and provide relief.

Self-Care & Stress Management

While it's important to check trusted sources for information and updates, there's no need to be tuned into the news all day. Ongoing news reports can contribute to increased anxiety and stress. Set a limit on how much time you spend checking the news.

Other ways you can manage your stress during this time include:

- **Adequate sleep** – ensure you're getting 6-8 hours of sleep a night
- **Meditation** – even three minutes of meditation a day can have positive effects on your health
- **Light exercise** – take a walk around the neighborhood; fresh air and sunlight are great for your immune system and can increase your mood and decrease your anxiety levels
- **Socialize** – even if we are being encouraged to embrace social isolation, you don't have to cut yourself off from everyone. Use alternative methods to socialize and check in with friends via FaceTime or give them a call
- **At-home hobbies** – adult coloring, puzzles or just catching up on that great TV show you've been promising yourself you'd watch are great stress relievers
- **Watch the One Source EAP [Calm Collection video series](#)** - In roughly two minutes, the EAP vows to help you and your family feel better. How do we do that? Some stress management, maybe a laugh or two

For more information about what you should know about the coronavirus please visit: <https://www.rwjbh.org/covid19>.

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