How to Deal with COVID-19 Anxiety

Stay informed, but do not obsessively check the news

- Stick to trustworthy sources such as the CDC, the World Health Organization, and your local public health authorities.
- Limit how often you check for updates. Constant monitoring of news and social media feeds can quickly turn compulsive and counterproductive—fueling anxiety rather than easing it. The limit is different for everyone, so pay attention to how you’re feeling and adjust accordingly.

Focus on the things you can control

- When you feel yourself getting caught up in fear of what might happen, try to shift your focus to things you can control. For example, you can’t control how severe the coronavirus outbreak is in your city or town, but you can take steps to reduce your own personal risk (and the risk you’ll unknowingly spread it to others), such as:
  - washing your hands frequently
  - avoiding touching your face
  - staying home as much as possible
  - avoiding crowds and gatherings
  - avoiding all non-essential shopping and travel
  - keeping 6 feet of distance between yourself and others when out
  - getting plenty of sleep, which helps support your immune system.

Plan for what you can

- Write down specific worries you have about how coronavirus may disrupt your life. If you start feeling overwhelmed, take a break.
- Make a list of all the possible solutions you can think of. Try not to get too hung up on “perfect” options. Include whatever comes to mind that could help you get by.

Take care of your body and spirit

- Be kind to yourself. Go easy on yourself if you’re experiencing more depression or anxiety than usual. You’re not alone in your struggles.
- Maintain a routine as best you can. Even if you’re stuck at home, try to stick to your regular sleep, school, meal, or work schedule. This can help you maintain a sense of normalcy.
- Avoid self-medicating. Be careful that you’re not using substances to deal with anxiety or depression. If you tend to overdo it in the best of times, it may be a good idea to avoid for now.

Do not over-react to physical symptoms

- If you cough, it does not mean you have the COVID-19. The same is true for others who cough. Allergies, bronchitis, post-nasal drip, and the cold are more common and a more likely explanation.
- Accept uncertainty as you do in other areas of life and assume what is most likely. Do not scan your body looking for symptoms. This behavior reinforces your worries and will increase anxiety.
- Call your doctor if you feel have concerns about your physical health.

Want to know more? Check out these resources from ADAA