

How to Stay Mentally Healthy During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tuesday, March 31, 2020



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People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- 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, people working in groceries, pharmacies, etc.
- People who have mental health conditions including substance abuse



Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include anxiety, fear and worry about:

- Your own health, the health of your loved ones, health status of others whom you may have exposed to the disease.
- The experience of monitoring yourself, or being monitored by others for signs and symptoms of the disease.
- Time taken off from work and the potential loss of income and job security.
- The challenges of securing things you need, such as groceries and personal care items.
- Concern about being able to effectively care for children or others in your care.



Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include anxiety, fear and worry about:

- Uncertainty or frustration about how long you will need to remain in this situation, and uncertainty about the future.
- Loneliness associated with feeling cut off from the world and from loved ones.
- Boredom and frustration because you may not be able to work or engage in regular day-to-day activities.
- Working from home.



Tips for Managing Anxiety, Fear & Uncertainty

Social distancing doesn't mean social isolation.

Reach out to a neighbor who may need help.

Exercise.

Eat a healthy diet & drink alcohol in moderation.

Get enough sleep.

Consume the news in moderation.



Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, & Isolation

It is normal to feel a bit worried or hopeless about when this will end but it is also important to understand the real risk of spreading the virus.

Create and follow a daily routine.

Pace yourself between stressful activities, and do something fun or relaxing after a hard task.

Talk about your experiences and feelings to loved ones and friends.

Examine your worries and aim to be realistic in your assessment of the actual concern as well as your ability to cope.



Tips for Working from Home

Set a routine and maintain a regular schedule (wake up time, getting dressed, lunch, ending the day).

Set a designated work space or home office.

Take breaks – go outside when you can and get fresh air.

Communicate with colleagues/ socialize / be aware of self-isolation.

If you have children:

- Talk with your employer/boss about expectations
- Split work time/childcare time with your partner if you have one and if you can



Vulnerable Populations Include People Living with:

- PTSD (Veterans/Trauma Survivors)
- Anxiety & Depression
- Other Psychiatric Illnesses
- People who have lost a loved one to illness during this crisis
- Financial Stress

For those with mental illnesses, be sure to continue your treatment regimens.

- Availability of telehealth



Sources for Reliable Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov>

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/en>

American Psychiatric Association

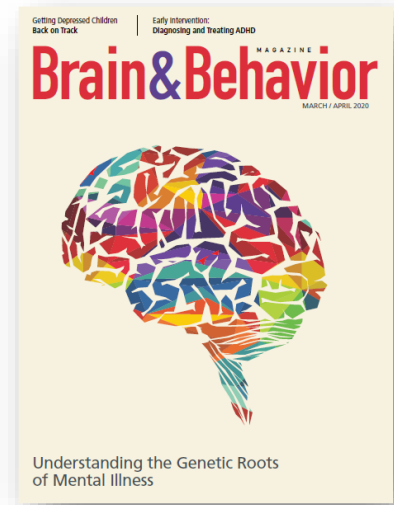
<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/covid-19-coronavirus>



BBRF Resources:

Brain & Behavior Magazine

<https://www.bbrfoundation.org/brain-behavior-magazine>



Healthy Minds

<https://www.bbrfoundation.org/healthy-minds-tv>



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Being anxious in this time is a completely normal response to stress.

Should the stress get in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row, please call your physician to schedule remote appointments via Zoom, Skype, or FaceTime for mental health, substance use, or physical health needs.

