

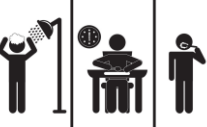




Coping with Anxiety during COVID-19 Pandemic

Many people find it difficult to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic because of the number of drastic and rapid changes happening in everyday life. The following evidence-based strategies may help preserve our psychological well-being and lessen our emotional distress.

	<p>Accepting negative emotions, rather than avoiding them, can lead to better psychological health. Fighting uncomfortable feelings can only make them stronger and last longer.</p> <p>Emotions come as a wave- it may feel intense at times but the uncomfortable feeling does not last forever. Practice allowing negative emotions to pass without changing or stopping it from happening.</p>
	<p>Limit exposure to news and social media reports about COVID-19. The more we think about and focus on the pandemic, the more our anxiety will increase.</p> <p>Try to check the news only a couple of times a day, and at set times. Seek information only for the purpose of gathering facts from reputable sources. Avoid constant streams of news reports and/or or conversations about COVID- 19. However, do not avoid the news all together- it is important to stay informed to protect yourself and loved ones.</p>
	<p>Create new routines. Coping during a pandemic is a marathon rather than a sprint. To adapt to the loss of usual routines, think of ways to reinvent your hobbies and/or habits.</p> <p>Planning a daily structure and setting new goals can increase a sense of predictability and purpose during unsettling times. Practice good self-care that includes regular meals, rest, physical activity and social contacts (virtual or phone).</p>
	<p>Distinguish fact from fear. Anxiety often leads us to perceive a situation as being far worse than it actually is.</p> <p>It is important for us to recognize and label when we are feeling anxious. This can help us react to unknown situations with a rational rather than fear-based mind.</p>
	<p>Build resilience through your coping strategies. What helps you unwind or cope during difficult times? Draw on these techniques to help you build resilience. Consider experimenting with new coping strategies, such as building a relaxation and/or mindfulness meditation practice.</p>