

# COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY AND COVID-19



## NORMAL VS. CONCERNING REACTIONS

### NORMAL REACTIONS

Although none of these reactions are pleasant, they are all quite normal. If what you are experiencing is in line with the bullet points below, you can check your own reaction off as one less thing you need to worry about – you are experiencing normal reactions to a stressful time.

- Feeling fatigued or more tired than usual
- Difficulties sleeping
- Increased irritability or even anger at times
- Body aches or headaches
- Decreased ability to concentrate/focus
- Appetite changes, particularly poor appetite
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty communicating well with others

### CONCERNING REACTIONS

The following reactions are more concerning. You should seek help if you are noticing any of these:

- Withdrawal from others
- Feelings or sense of hopelessness that won't go away
- Any thoughts that it would be better if you were dead or thoughts of ending your life
- Drinking or other drug-use as a way of coping with emotions
- Anxiety that makes it difficult to function normally or close to normally

## MANAGE WHAT YOU CAN

In times of uncertainty, many things are outside of our control. One of the best ways to manage emotions during times of uncertainty is to focus on what is within our control:



### **If you aren't sleeping well, check out resources to help improve sleep.**

Stick to a schedule, stop using screens 30-60 minutes prior to bedtime, and engage in a relaxing bedtime routine that includes meditation.



**Get exercise!** Go for a bike ride, walk or run. Aim for 30 minutes of exercise five days a week, or as much as you can manage. There are MANY online exercise opportunities right now, and many of them are free or quite affordable.



**Keep a schedule.** Get up and go to bed around the same times each day. If you are working from home, keep a similar schedule as you had previously. Keep up on all your regular tasks if you can.



**Eat food that is good for you.** Your body needs good fuel right now to stay healthy, both physically and emotionally. If you are at home more than usual, use the extra time to prepare healthy meals.



### **Limit how often and how long you watch or read news about COVID-19.**

Make sure the news you do consume includes useful information, and stop watching/reading if you are feeling more scared but not more informed.



**Connect with family and friends.** Make sure you maintain physical distance, but check in via video chat, texting or phone calls. Connecting with others during times of stress actually releases hormones that help protect and heal damage that might be caused by long-term stress.



**Help others if you have a safe way of doing so.** If you have sewing skills, you can make masks for others. Perhaps you are able to shop for someone who is at risk and cannot leave home. Helping others also releases those protective and healing hormones that we need during times of stress.



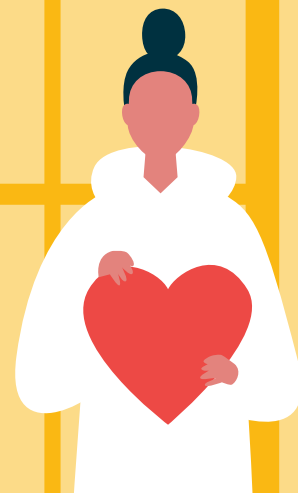
**Schedule some fun,** like a hobby, playing games with family/friends or relaxing in a bath.



**Be very mindful of alcohol consumption** or using any other substances to feel more relaxed or even “numb”. Do not drink more than two drinks in a sitting.

Above all, remember that you are going through extremely uncertain and unsettling times; everyone else is as well. It is normal to feel on edge and anxious right now. In fact, it is even GOOD that you are feeling this way, because that anxiety and stress can push us to do things to cope in healthy ways. It pushes us to listen to the medical community and follow guidelines to keep ourselves and our families safe. It also pushes us to connect with others, which helps to manage stress and anxiety in healthy ways.

# RESOURCES



## NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

**NATIONAL**  
**SUICIDE**  
**PREVENTION**  
**LIFELINE**<sup>TM</sup>  
**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

## CRISIS TEXT LINE

Text HELLO to 741741  
24/7, confidential

## CRISIS CARE CENTER

Call 1-605-391-4863  
24/7, 18 years and older

## USEFUL APPS

### Insight Timer App

*(free in your app Store)*

This app can be used to help fall asleep or for meditations to feel calmer.

### CBT-i Coach

*(free app put out by the VA to help with insomnia)*

## PTSD Coach

*(free app put out by the VA to help with anxiety and depression – focuses on taking action)*

## What's Up?

*(free App with lots of coping skills)*

## USEFUL WEBSITES

### [nowmattersnow.org](https://nowmattersnow.org)

Website for crisis situations, including strategies to safely cope with suicidal thoughts.

### [go.edc.org/covid19-resources](https://go.edc.org/covid19-resources)

*(lots of resources including ones specifically for adults and for children)*

### [psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hope-resilience/202003/how-talk-your-kids-about-covid-19](https://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hope-resilience/202003/how-talk-your-kids-about-covid-19)

*(another resource addressing how to talk to kids)*

### [www.facebook.com/SPIEXOS/](https://www.facebook.com/SPIEXOS/)

The Sports Performance Institute Powered by EXOS posts free, short workouts to their Facebook page.

## TELEHEALTH VISITS

Many mental health providers are now offering telehealth visits and most insurances are covering this service.

Check out the Black Hills Behavioral Health Guide at [helplinecenter.org/2-1-1-community-resources/resource-guides/black-hills-behavioral-health-guide/](https://helplinecenter.org/2-1-1-community-resources/resource-guides/black-hills-behavioral-health-guide/).

You will need to check with your insurance to ensure that they are covering telehealth visits.

The Helpline Center also has Covid-19 specific resources. You can also call 211. [helplinecenter.org/when-disaster-strikes/](https://helplinecenter.org/when-disaster-strikes/)

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