

Managing Stress During COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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The spread of a new virus like COVID-19 can be stressful. It is normal to feel fear and anxiety about COVID-19 as positive cases appear in local communities, and as routines are disrupted by social distancing and home isolation.

Stress during this time can have a big impact on home lives. It is normal to feel like things are out of control, but there are ways to bring down stress levels. To reduce stress, it is important to learn how to recognize the signs of stress and to learn strategies for managing stress. For some people - like those who experience violence at home - more help may be needed to support a safe home environment.

Recognizing the signs of stress

A person's body can react to stress in strong ways. People have different signs of stress, but they may include:

- An increase or decrease in energy and activity levels
- An increase in frustration, with outbursts of anger and frequent arguing
- Having trouble relaxing or sleeping
- Not wanting to eat or eating too much
- Worrying much more than usual
- Wanting to be alone most of the time
- Not able to feel pleasure or have fun
- Feeling depressed, anxious, or fearful
- An increase in alcohol use or use of illegal drugs

Strategies to manage stress

Stress can be managed, even when it feels like it's impossible to deal with. Here are some strategies to reduce stress at home:

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Instead, read a book or watch a show that takes the mind off the news.
- Care for the body! Take deep breaths with eyes closed, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Exercise! Get outside for a walk, or do an in-home workout.
- Connect with others through a phone call or video chat! Share concerns and feelings with a friend or family member.
- Try to laugh! Humor is a great way to calm the mind.



Support for those at risk of violence in the home

People who experience violence or abuse at home may be experiencing increased stress and danger during this period of social distancing and home isolation.

If someone is experiencing violence or abuse in their home, they are not alone. There are many resources available to help:

- The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** is 24/7, confidential and free: **1-800-799-7233** and through chat.
- The **National Sexual Assault Hotline** is 24/7, confidential and free: **800.656.HOPE (4673)** and through chat.
- The **StrongHearts Native Helpline** for domestic/sexual violence is available 7am-10pm CT, confidential, and specifically for Native communities: **1-844-762-8483**.
- The **SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline** offers 24/7, confidential and free crisis counseling: **1-800-985-5990**.
- They can also reach out to a friend, co-worker, or family member who can check in with them about their safety and support needs, and help them make plans for staying somewhere else if their situation becomes dangerous.

We all can support those at risk by reaching out to loved ones, friends, neighbors, and coworkers to see if they have the care and support they need, and if they feel safe at home. If you suspect someone you know may be experiencing violence or abuse at home, consider reaching out to let them know you are available to talk. You can also call the free, confidential **National Domestic Violence Hotline** 24/7 at **1-800-799-7233**.

For more information: www.CDC.gov/coronavirus



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www.futureswithoutviolence.org