

Tips for Reducing Anxiety During the COVID-19 Outbreak

Ground yourself in science.

Science-based facts will ground you in a reality where truth, hope, and interventions exist. Resist sensational news or social media, where facts are often blurred or exaggerated. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) (CDC) provides information and frequent updates.

Limit your consumption of the news.

A near-constant stream of news reports can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. Instead, seek CDC updates and practical guidelines at specific times during the day.

Isolate but stay connected to others.

Protect yourself and others with social distance and homebound activities. But make sure to keep your attachments to friends, family, and loved ones by calling, texting, using FaceTime or Skype.

Get your emotional support system in place.

Maintain familiar routines in daily life as much as possible; Routines and schedules reduce stress and anxiety in our lives. Keep your list of support people or tools at your fingertips so you can draw on them easily if needed.

Think locally, not globally.

Focus on what is happening in your local community and what you can do to keep yourself and neighbors healthy and safe. A sense of community is vital for moving through traumatic situations and builds resiliency in children and adults.

Practice self-care and make sure others do too.

Be mindful about eating well, keeping a healthy sleep cycle, exercising, and other soothing self-care behaviors. Make sure to avoid using alcohol or drugs to cope with stress. And limit caffeine as it heightens anxiety and irritability.

Fight helplessness by finding purpose.

The uncertainty that COVID-19 brings can leave many of us feeling unspeakably helpless. Finding purpose can alleviate restlessness and anxiety. Choose things you can control, be it shifting negative thoughts into positive ones, deciding what to cook for lunch, reading a good book, picking what movie you and the kids will watch, or other activities you have power over.