COVID-19 and Anxiety

Ways to Cope with Strong Feelings Related to COVID-19

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, strongly offers these recommendations for coping with anxiety related to the COVID-19 outbreak:

- Remember that distress, anxiety, fear, and strong emotions are normal in times of distress or crisis. Remind yourself and others that these feelings will fade.

- Get information from a trusted source, such as coronavirus.ohio.gov or by calling the Ohio COVID-19 call center at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).
  - Learn and follow tips for preparing for and responding to COVID-19.
  - Learn and follow tips on how to prevent COVID-19.

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19. It is important to get good information to help you prepare and respond, but don't overwhelm yourself or your family with information.

- Eat nutritious food, exercise, get adequate sleep, stay hydrated, avoid alcohol and drugs, and make time to relax and unwind.

- Incorporate stretching or meditation into your routine. Take deep breaths when feeling overwhelmed.

- Stay connected with friends and family. Discuss your concerns and be supportive of theirs.

- Keep participating in hobbies/activities that do not expose you to close contact with others in confined spaces.

- If you have a mental health condition, continue with your treatment plan and monitor for any new symptoms. Call your healthcare provider with any concerns.

- Recognize signs of distress:
  - Feeling hopeless or helpless.

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov
Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear.
- Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images.
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Anger or short-temper.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

- Call your healthcare provider if your feelings overwhelm you for several days in a row.

- Reach out for help:
  - Contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s national Disaster Distress Helpline by calling 1-800-985-5990 or texting TalkWithUs to 66746.
  - Reach the Ohio Crisis Text Line* by texting keyword 4HOPE to 741 741.
  - Reach the Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services Help Line* at 1.877.275.6364
  - Find a provider at https://findtreatment.gov.

*These functions will remain operational and staffed.

Additional resources on mental health and COVID-19 can be found at mha.ohio.gov/coronavirus.

For additional COVID-19 information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).
For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov