

# Managing stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 outbreak

During this time of uncertainty, it is completely normal to have increased stress and anxiety. Anxiety is our brain and body's way of letting us know something is out of the norm. To help manage this, consider implementing some of the following practices.

## **Maintain a routine.**

Doing so helps to normalize our situation and keep us focused on one task or activity at a time.

## **Practice self-care.**

Get enough sleep, eat regular and nutritious meals, stay active and hydrated, and prioritize your mental health needs.

## **Make time for stress-relief activities.**

Whether it's reading a book, going for a walk, taking a hot bath, baking cookies or practicing meditation/yoga, find something that allows you to rest your mind for a while.

## **Connect with others.**

Call a sibling, skype your parents, text a friend, email a coworker or connect with peers on social media. In a time of mandated isolation, this is especially important.

## **Avoid excessive exposure to the media coverage.**

It's important to stay informed on recent developments, but make sure you are giving yourself time to decompress, relax and be present at home, too.

## **Take advantage of free apps and online resources.**

- Headspace, a relaxation and stress reduction app, is offering its app free to all U.S. healthcare workers through the end of the year.
- YouTube has many guided relaxation and meditation videos available at no cost.
- Websites like [mindful.org](http://mindful.org), [greatergood.berkeley.edu](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu) and others offer great tips and resources for maintaining your health.

## **Just breathe.**

Inhale through your nose (four seconds), exhale through your mouth (four seconds). Practice this for three minutes at a time, as many times as you need.

**If you are feeling suicidal, call 9-1-1, 2-1-1, or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.**

***Remember: This is new to all of us. We are in this together, and we will get through this together.***

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