

COPING WITH THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

TIP SHEET



What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus is part of a large family of viruses that causes illness ranging from the common cold to much more severe diseases, where it can be spread from person to person. Symptoms of the virus include fever, cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties and in more serious cases it can lead to pneumonia, kidney failure and even death.

Impact on mental health

With a global outbreak like this, as a result many do not know how to cope and instead can experience feelings of anxiety and stress. Here are a few physical, emotional and cognitive ways your body and mind may respond to the outbreak:

- Feelings of fear and anxiety associated with you or loved ones contracting the virus.
- Feelings associated with guilt
- Feeling overwhelmed by sadness
- Feeling confused and having trouble thinking clearly/concentrating
- Being easily startled
- Changes in eating patterns
- Increased use of illicit drugs or alcohol
- Frequent crying
- Blaming other people for everything
- Having trouble sleeping or relaxing

Strategies for coping

Coping with this outbreak will be different for everyone. Here are a few helpful tips and strategies for coping with the feelings of stress and or anxiety associated with COVID-19:

- Try to limit the amount of media exposure and viewing about the outbreak, as being exposed to vast amounts of negative information can be upsetting and heighten feelings of anxiety.
- Try to still take part in activities/hobbies you enjoy and where possible try to maintain normal routines whilst also taking reasonable and hygienic precautions.
- Strengthen self-care and continue to physically look after yourself by getting adequate sleep, eating healthy foods, exercising regularly and practising mindfulness.
- Use this time to relax, take a break, unwind and focus on the positive parts of your life.
- Remain connected with friends and family, talk about your feelings towards the outbreak as well as enjoying conversations unrelated to the outbreak.
- Only try to rely on reputable sources with scientific facts and information in order to maintain perspective and manage your feelings positively.

Support/Resources

- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636
- National Coronavirus Helpline: 1800 020 080.

- Visit the World Health Organization's website for global updates.
- Visit the Department of Health's website for the latest alerts on COVID-19 in Australia

Coronavirus (COVID-19) health alert. (2020). Retrieved 20 March 2020, from <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>. Coronavirus. (2020). Retrieved 20 March 2020, from <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>. (2020). Retrieved 20 March 2020, from <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4885.pdf>

New View Psychology are here to support you during this time of uncertainty, offering phone and telehealth sessions.

**For more information, call one of our friendly staff on 1300 830 687
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