

HEALTHIER STATE OF MIND

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic may cause stress, fear, and anxiety --- especially in older people, those with chronic disease, children and teens, health care providers, and people who have mental health and substance abuse conditions. Learning how to cope with these feelings will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. For further information, visit health.mypgc.us/coronavirus or call (301) 883-6627.



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT
Prince George's County



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Stress during an infectious disease outbreak may include

- Worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased irritability and interpersonal conflict
- Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

What can you do to cope with stress?



Take breaks from news stories, including social media. Get outside. Get exercise. **Exercise increases the body's built-in anti-anxiety hormones** and releases pleasure-producing endorphins, helping you feel calmer. **But don't forget about social distancing.**

Connect with others.



Talk with people you trust about how you are feeling, or call loved ones just to say hi and check on each other. Use FaceTime if you have it on your phone to see each other's faces.

Stay Healthy.



Eat fruits, vegetables, and beans. These high fiber foods flush your system. Foods high in sugar, salt, or caffeine may increase stress. **Drink water.** **Get plenty of sleep.** **Avoid alcohol and drugs.**

Try deep-belly breathing.



Eyes closed, lying on your back, gently place your hands on your belly. Inhale and exhale. Feel your belly expand and contract. Visualize your navel and spine meeting. Repeat.



If you or someone you care about is feeling overwhelmed by feelings of sadness, depression, or anxiety, or you have thoughts of wanting to harm yourself or others, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746. (TTY 1-800-846-8517). You can also call Maryland's Helpline by dialing 211 or text "MD" to 741741 anytime, about any type of crisis.