

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.
 - 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).

101 Coping Skills

1. Exercise
2. Write (Poetry, journaling, stories)
3. Put on fake tattoos
4. Scribble or doodle on paper
5. Visit with friends
6. Watch a favorite TV show
7. Post on web boards and answer others' questions
8. Go see a movie
9. Do a word search
10. Play a musical instrument
11. Paint your nails
12. Sing
13. Study the clouds in the sky
14. Punch a punching bag or pillow
15. Cover yourself with bandaids
16. Let yourself cry
17. Take a nap (if you are tired)
18. Take a hot shower or bath
19. Play with a pet
20. Go shopping
21. Pet animals at your local animal shelter
22. Clean something
23. Knit or sew
24. Read a good book
25. Listen to music
26. Try some aromatherapy
27. Meditate
28. Look at the stars
29. Go on a picnic
30. Alphabetize your CDs/Books/DVDs
31. Paint or draw
32. Rip paper into itty-bitty pieces
33. Shoot hoops
34. Kick a ball
35. Write a letter or email
36. Plan your dream room with colors, furniture, and all
37. Hug a pillow or stuffed animal
38. Hyperfocus on something like a rock or your hand

101 Coping Skills

39. Dance
40. Make hot chocolate, smoothie, or a milkshake
41. Play with clay or play-dough
42. Go for a nice long walk
43. Build a pillow fort
44. Complete something you've been putting off
45. Draw on yourself with marker or paints
46. Take up a new hobby
47. Golf
48. Look up recipes and cook a great meal
49. Look at art
50. Create or build something
51. Pray
52. Make a list of blessings in your life
53. Jump on a trampoline
54. Bake cookies for a neighbor
55. Contact a hotline or your therapist
56. Talk to someone close to you
57. Ride a bike
58. Feed the ducks, birds, or squirrels
59. Color with crayons
60. Memorize a poem or play
61. Stretch
62. Search for ridiculous things on the internet
63. Shop online without buying anything
64. Learn a new joke
65. Watch fish
66. Make a playlist of your favorite songs
67. Play the "15 minute game" (avoid something for 15 minutes, when time is up start over again)
68. Plan your wedding/prom/other event
69. Plant some seeds
70. Hunt for your dream home or dream car online
71. Try to make as many words out of your full name as possible
72. Sort through your photographs
73. Play with a balloon
74. Give yourself a facial
75. Start collecting something
76. Play video/computer games

101 Coping Skills

77. Clean up trash at your local park
78. Perform a random act of kindness
79. Text or call an old friend
80. Write yourself an "I love you because..." letter
81. Look up new words and use them
82. Rearrange furniture
83. Write a letter to someone that you may never send
84. Smile at five people
85. Put a puzzle together
86. Clean out a closet
87. Try to do handstands or cartwheels
88. Yoga
89. Teach your pet a new trick
90. Learn a new language
91. Play frisbee, soccer, or basketball
92. Hug a friend
93. Make a list of goals for the week/month/year/5 years
94. Face paint
95. Take pictures of nature/flowers
96. Volunteer
97. Offer to walk a neighbor's dog
98. Read the comics of something funny
99. Scream into a pillow
100. Practice taking deep breaths
101. Jog in place