



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER

FAMILY COPING KIT

COVID-19



Greetings,

During this unprecedented time as we are battling COVID-19, stress levels are high. The uncertainty of the future, as well as the effects of COVID-19, has the entire country looking for answers. COVID-19 not only affects people physically, but also mentally, financially emotionally and even spiritually.

How do you protect your mental health and emotional immune system? You are not alone in what you are feeling. During this time, reducing stress levels and anxiety are very important. It's important to find a balance so that managing the stress of life becomes a little bit easier.

This packet is a resource for beginners, so don't worry if you do not have any experience with meditation. In this packet, you will find links to beginner's meditation, guided imagery and deep breathing exercises. The links found in this packet serve as coping resources.

Coping Skills

Ten Healthy Coping Skills

Play Music

Play music that creates an emotion opposite of the one you are struggling with. For example, if you are feeling sad, play happy and upbeat music. If you are feeling anxious, play slow and relaxing music.

Do Something

Participate in a highly engaging activity. Television or computer activities do not count here - these are too passive. Instead, take a walk, dance, clean your house or do some other activity that keeps you distracted from your current emotions.

Call Someone

Reaching out to others can really help when you are struggling with strong emotions. Call a supportive friend or family member. Identify someone you feel is supportive and ask them if they would be willing to be available to you when needed.

Pray

Are you a religious or spiritual person? If you are (or even if you are considering trying), praying can be tremendously helpful in times of extreme stress.

Ride It Out

The peak of most strong emotional reactions (and the urges to engage in harmful activities such as self-harming, drinking or not taking prescribed medication) last for a few minutes and then begin to subside. Grab a timer or watch and set it for 10 minutes. Wait the 10 minutes and practice riding out the emotion.

Be Mindful

Practice mindfulness and recognize the emotions you are feeling. Let yourself experience your emotions as waves without trying to block it, suppress it or hold on to it. Try to accept the emotion for what it is.

Breathe Deeply

Sit or lie somewhere quiet and bring your attention to your breathing. Breathe evenly, slowly and deeply. Watch your stomach rise and fall with each breath.

Take a Warm Bath or Shower

Try to lose yourself in the sensations of the warm water, the smell of the soap, etc. Allow the sensations to distract you from the situation you are upset about.

Ground Yourself

When emotions seem to be taking you out of the current moment (e.g., you are starting to feel “zoned out” or can’t see anything else going on at the moment), do something to ground yourself. Grab an ice cube and hold it in your hand for a few moments or snap a rubber band against your wrist to try and “snap yourself back” into the moment.

Help Someone Else

Do something nice for someone else. It doesn’t have to be something big. For example, you can walk to the nearest store, buy a pack of gum, smile at the cashier and say, “Have a great day!” It may sound silly, but small gestures like this are effective in reducing emotional pain.

Guided Imagery

- **Use Guided Imagery for Relaxation:** <https://www.verywellmind.com/use-guided-imagery-for-relaxation-3144606>
- **15 Minute Guided Imagery Meditation Exercise:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcdbCphVa1g>
- **Ocean Escape:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar_W4jSzOIM
- **Take 5 - The Forest Awakens:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gU_ABFUAVAs

Beginners Meditation

- **5-Minute Meditation You Can Do Anywhere:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inpok4MKVLM>
- **Smiling Mind App (downloadable app):** <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>
- **How to Meditate:** <https://www.mindful.org/how-to-meditate/>

Deep Breathing Techniques

- **10 Breathing Techniques:** <https://www.healthline.com/health/breathing-exercise#pursedlip-%20breathing>
- **How to do Deep Breathing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYQsRBNYdPk>
- **Mindful Breathing Meditation:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmFUDkj1Aq0>

Spend Time in Nature

- **Spend Time in Nature to Reduce Stress and Anxiety:** <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/spend-time-in-nature-to-reduce-stress-and-anxiety>
- **Health Benefits of Nature:** https://www.asla.org/healthbenefitsofnature.aspx?gclid=CjwKCAiA17P9BRB2EiwAMvwNyMFXI_S7M9kF0mbFJhR9PaF0CHk2mLzaaOzgfnauqyBTShNBMtNdRoCNsUQAvD_BwE
- **Sour Mood Getting You Down? Get Back to Nature:** <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/sour-mood-getting-you-down-get-back-to-nature>

Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event

Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event



After a disaster, it is important to take care of your emotional health. Pay attention to how you and your family members are feeling and acting.

Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to urgent needs to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Follow these tips to help you and your family recover or find support.

Steps to Care for Yourself

- Take Care of Your Body
 - » Try to eat healthy, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and other drugs.
- Connect
 - » Share your feelings with a friend or family member. Maintain relationships and rely on your support system.
- Take Breaks
 - » Make time to unwind. Try to return to activities that you enjoy.
- Stay Informed
 - » Watch for news updates from reliable officials.
- Avoid
 - » Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of the event.
- Ask for Help
 - » Talk to a clergy member, counselor, or doctor or contact the SAMHSA helpline at 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

How to Help Your Children

- Talk with them.
 - » Share age-appropriate information.
 - » Reassure them.
 - » Address rumors.
 - » Answer questions.
- Set a good example by taking care of yourself.
- Limit exposure to media and social media coverage of the event.

Common Signs of Distress

- Feelings of shock, numbness, or disbelief
- Change in energy or activity levels
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in appetite
- Sleeping problems or nightmares
- Feeling anxious, fearful, or angry
- Headaches, body pain, or skin rashes
- Chronic health problems get worse
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Seek help from your healthcare provider if these stress reactions interfere with your daily activities for several days in a row.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.



People with deafness or hearing loss can use their preferred relay service to call 1-800-985-5990.

Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health



Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health:

TIPS FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE, AND ISOLATION DURING AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK

What Is Social Distancing?

Social distancing is a way to keep people from interacting closely or frequently enough to spread an infectious disease. Schools and other gathering places such as movie theaters may close, and sports events and religious services may be cancelled.

What Is Quarantine?

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. It lasts long enough to ensure the person has not contracted an infectious disease.

What Is Isolation?

Isolation prevents the spread of an infectious disease by separating people who are sick from those who are not. It lasts as long as the disease is contagious.

Introduction

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, local officials may require the public to take measures to limit and control the spread of the disease. This tip sheet provides information about **social distancing, quarantine, and isolation**. The government has the right to enforce federal and state laws related to public health if people

within the country get sick with highly contagious diseases that have the potential to develop into outbreaks or pandemics.

This tip sheet describes feelings and thoughts you may have during and after social distancing, quarantine, and isolation. It also suggests ways to care for your behavioral health during these experiences and provides resources for more help.

What To Expect: Typical Reactions

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations such as an infectious disease outbreak that requires social distancing, quarantine, or isolation. People may feel:

- **Anxiety, worry, or fear** related to:
 - Your own health status
 - The health status of others whom you may have exposed to the disease
 - The resentment that your friends and family may feel if they need to go into quarantine as a result of contact with you
 - The experience of monitoring yourself, or being monitored by others for signs and symptoms of the disease
 - Time taken off from work and the potential loss of income and job security
 - The challenges of securing things you need, such as groceries and personal care items

- **Concern** about being able to effectively care for children or others in your care
- **Uncertainty or frustration** about how long you will need to remain in this situation, and uncertainty about the future
- **Loneliness** associated with feeling cut off from the world and from loved ones
- **Anger** if you think you were exposed to the disease because of others' negligence
- **Boredom and frustration** because you may not be able to work or engage in regular day-to-day activities
- **Uncertainty or ambivalence** about the situation
- **A desire to use alcohol or drugs** to cope
- **Symptoms of depression**, such as feelings of hopelessness, changes in appetite, or sleeping too little or too much
- **Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, such as intrusive distressing memories, flashbacks (reliving the event), nightmares, changes in thoughts and mood, and being easily startled

If you or a loved one experience any of these reactions for 2 to 4 weeks or more, contact your health care provider or one of the resources at the end of this tip sheet.

Ways To Support Yourself During Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation

UNDERSTAND THE RISK

Consider the real risk of harm to yourself and others around you. The public perception of risk during a situation such as an infectious disease outbreak is often inaccurate. Media coverage may create the impression that people are in immediate danger when really the risk for infection may be very low. Take steps to get the facts:

- Stay up to date on what is happening, while limiting your media exposure. Avoid watching or listening to news reports 24/7 since this tends to increase anxiety and worry. Remember that children are especially affected by what they hear and see on television.
- Look to credible sources for information on the infectious disease outbreak (see page 3 for sources of reliable outbreak-related information).

BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

Speaking out about your needs is particularly important if you are in quarantine, since you may not be in a hospital or other facility where your basic needs are met. Ensure you have what you need to feel safe, secure, and comfortable.

- Work with local, state, or national health officials to find out how you can arrange for groceries and toiletries to be delivered to your home as needed.
- Inform health care providers or health authorities of any needed medications and work with them to ensure that you continue to receive those medications.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Health care providers and health authorities should provide information on the disease, its diagnosis, and treatment.

- Do not be afraid to ask questions—clear communication with a health care provider may help reduce any distress associated with social distancing, quarantine, or isolation.
- Ask for written information when available.
- Ask a family member or friend to obtain information in the event that you are unable to secure this information on your own.

WORK WITH YOUR EMPLOYER TO REDUCE FINANCIAL STRESS

If you're unable to work during this time, you may experience stress related to your job status or financial situation.

- Provide your employer with a clear explanation of why you are away from work.
- Contact the U.S. Department of Labor toll-free at 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243) about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows U.S. employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for serious medical conditions, or to care for a family member with a serious medical condition.
- Contact your utility providers, cable and Internet provider, and other companies from whom you get monthly bills to explain your situation and request alternative bill payment arrangements as needed.
- If approved by health authorities and your health care providers, arrange for your friends and loved ones to bring you newspapers, movies, and books.
- Sign up for emergency alerts via text or email to ensure you get updates as soon as they are available.
- Call SAMHSA's free 24-hour Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990, if you feel lonely or need support.
- Use the Internet, radio, and television to keep up with local, national, and world events.
- If you need to connect with someone because of an ongoing alcohol or drug problem, consider calling your local Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous offices.

Sources for Reliable Outbreak-Related Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
<http://www.cdc.gov>

World Health Organization

Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization
525 23rd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
202-974-3000
<http://www.who.int/en>

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Reaching out to people you trust is one of the best ways to reduce anxiety, depression, loneliness, and boredom during social distancing, quarantine, and isolation. You can:

- Use the telephone, email, text messaging, and social media to connect with friends, family, and others.
- Talk “face to face” with friends and loved ones using Skype or FaceTime.

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you are in a medical facility, you may have access to health care providers who can answer your questions. However, if you are quarantined at home, and you're worried about physical symptoms you or your loved ones may be experiencing, call your doctor or other health care provider:

- Ask your provider whether it would be possible to schedule remote appointments via Skype or FaceTime for mental health, substance use, or physical health needs.
- In the event that your doctor is unavailable and you are feeling stressed or are in crisis, call the hotline numbers listed at the end of this tip sheet for support.

USE PRACTICAL WAYS TO COPE AND RELAX

- Relax your body often by doing things that work for you—take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or pray, or engage in activities you enjoy.
- Pace yourself between stressful activities, and do something fun after a hard task.

- Talk about your experiences and feelings to loved ones and friends, if you find it helpful.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking; consider keeping a journal where you write down things you are grateful for or that are going well.

After Social Distancing, Quarantine, or Isolation

You may experience mixed emotions, including a sense of relief. If you were isolated because you had the illness, you may feel sadness or anger because friends and loved ones may have unfounded fears of contracting the disease from contact with you, even though you have been determined not to be contagious.

The best way to end this common fear is to learn about the disease and the actual risk to others. Sharing this information will often calm fears in others and allow you to reconnect with them.

If you or your loved ones experience symptoms of extreme stress—such as trouble sleeping, problems with eating too much or too little, inability to carry out routine daily activities, or using drugs or alcohol to cope—speak to a health care provider or call one of the hotlines listed to the right for a referral.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

Helpful Resources

Hotlines

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990 (English and español)

SMS: Text TalkWithUs to 66746

SMS (español): "Hablamos" al 66746

TTY: 1-800-846-8517

Website (English): <http://www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov>

Website (español): <http://www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov/espanol.aspx>

SAMHSA's National Helpline

Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (24/7/365 Treatment Referral Information Service in English and español)

Website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Toll-Free (English): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Toll-Free (español): 1-888-628-9454

TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

Website (English): <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Website (español): <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/gethelp/spanish.aspx>

Treatment Locator

Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator

Website: <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator/home>

SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center

Toll-Free: 1-800-308-3515

Email: DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov

Website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>

**Note: Inclusion or mention of a resource in this fact sheet does not imply endorsement by the Center for Mental Health Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*



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How to Protect Yourself & Others

Help protect yourself and others

COUGH AND SNEEZE ETIQUETTE

Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze



Don't sneeze into your hands



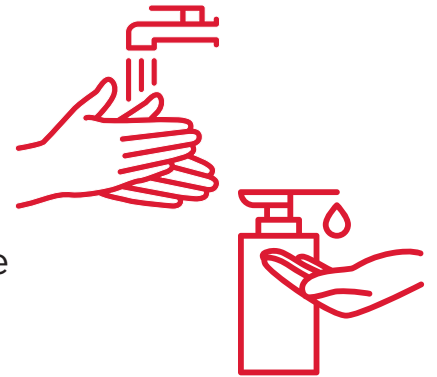
Sneeze into the inside of your elbow if you don't have a tissue



Throw used tissues in the trash right away



Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose



Help protect yourself and others

HAND HYGIENE

*** Wash your hands** often to help stop the spread of disease

- 1** **Wet your hands** using clean water and soap
- 2** **Lather your hands** using the soap
- 3** **Scrub** for at least 20 seconds
- 4** **Rinse** with clean water
- 5** **Dry** your hands



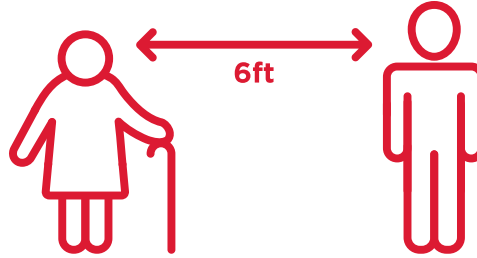
*** If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**



Help protect yourself and others

SLOW THE SPREAD

Help protect yourself and others by **avoiding close contact**, especially with people who are sick



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue, or the inside of your elbow



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



Help protect yourself and others

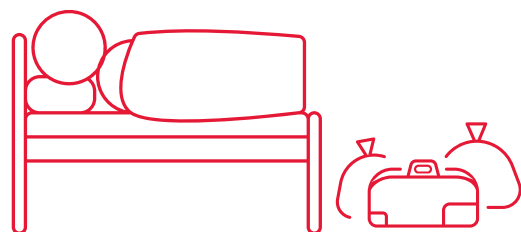
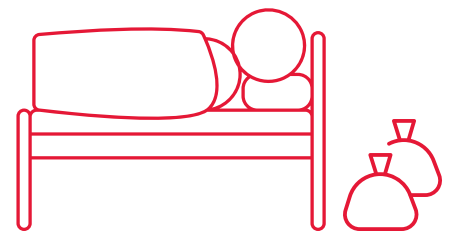
SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

Provide **plenty of space between beds**

Assign people to the same bed

Place beds head to toe

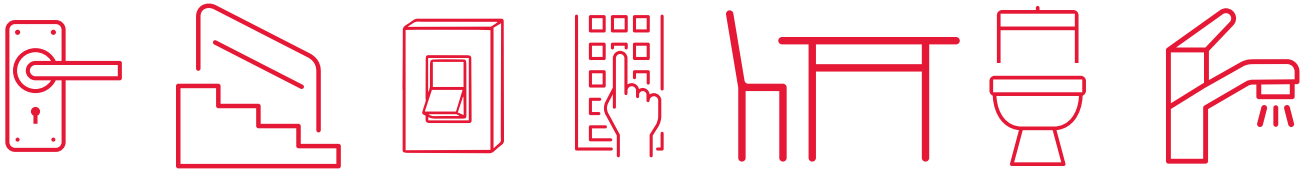
Provide bags or bins for the storage of personal items



Help protect yourself and others

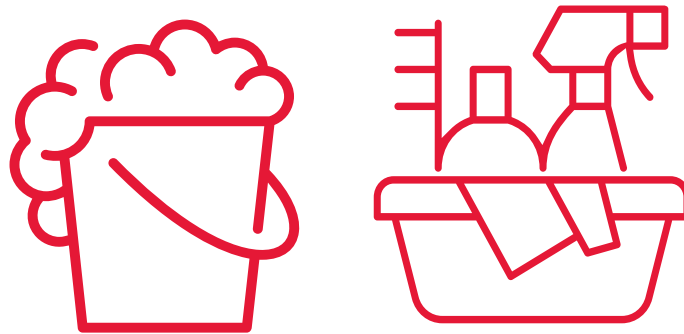
CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Clean and disinfect **high-touch surfaces and objects**. This includes **doorknobs, handrails, light switches, elevator buttons, tables, toilets and sinks**



First, clean surface dirt off of objects using soap and water

Then, use a household disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions



For more information, visit umms.org/covid



Do you have
Questions
about Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Call Our Free 24/7
NURSE CALL LINE
1-888-713-0711

COVID-19 RESPONSE



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SYSTEM

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