Coping with the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak

The constant media coverage and health organization alerts about the spread of the Novel Coronavirus have naturally caused great concern. Since the risk of infection has spread, people are becoming worried about how this situation may affect them, their families, their friends and their country. Fear that precautions to prevent the further spread of the virus might fail are beginning to surface.

The first step to coping with stress and uncertainty is to understand the psychological impact it is having on us, on our children, and the people around us.

Lean on your Employee Assistance Program

Talking to a professional counselor may help you control your reactions and maintain perspective. Your EAP is a free and completely confidential service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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What to expect

People deal with uncertainty and stress in different ways, and differ in how they attach meaning to events or the extent to which they expect it to influence life. Additionally, people differ in how they express emotion and feel accountable and responsible to family and friends. Despite these individual differences, it is a common human experience to be impacted by extreme stress and threats to health and safety. Below are some normal reactions to such circumstances.

During times of high stress, it is perfectly natural to feel:

- Overwhelmed / shocked
- Frightened
- Anxious
- Distressed
- Worried
- Confused
- Helpless and powerless

These reactions may express themselves in different ways, including:

- Anxiety about traveling to and from work, traveling within or outside the country
- Anxiety in the presence of unknown persons or when in a crowd
- Difficulty concentrating and attending to business
- Uncharacteristic changes in sleeping and/or eating patterns
- Unusual irritation, agitation, heightened sense of alertness and jumpiness
- Preoccupation with the news
- Concerns relating to the safety of family members and friends
- Heightened emotions/increased sadness, irritability and anger
- A strong desire to be with friends and family
- A desire to implement strong rules and guidance to navigate the situation

In the workplace

Everyone reacts differently to the threat of or an emerging crisis and this can affect workplace dynamics. The varied responses to the situation may cause:

- Increased inter-personal conflict
- A breakdown of coworker communications
- Work team or group dynamics may improve or they may suffer – depending on the group dynamic and their individual response to the crisis situation
- Social distancing to avoid interaction and/or infection

Those who work in industries exposed to the public—i.e., public transportation, customer service, or health care—may experience heightened anxiety.

Managing your health

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, which will lower the chance of passing flu germs into your system.

Get medical attention if you have the flu. Remember that the flu can be dangerous and even life threatening. Visit your family physician, local clinic or emergency room if you become ill with a virus. If you are traveling internationally, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy if you have the flu and need medical attention.

Remember to take care of yourself whether you are at home or away. Get enough sleep and eat balanced meals to avoid becoming run down. Practice good hygiene and virus avoidance techniques to keep you and your family healthy during flu season and virus outbreaks.

Managing your stress

While we have no control over the Novel Coronavirus Virus, we do have control over how we manage our own reactions to the situation; these are times when we need to pay attention to how we manage our stress.

As much as possible:

- Maintain family and work routines.
- Eat a healthy diet and stay physically active.
- Reach out to people close to you and, where possible, stay connected to family and friends abroad.
- Limit exposure to media. Instead, monitor the situation through government websites including the US government websites, Centers for Disease Control, or the World Health Organization.
- Separate factual information from imagined fears.
- Remember that your feelings may vary from day to day and may be different than the feelings and thoughts of those around you.
- Set aside time every day for self-care and positive distraction. Do something that you enjoy and that brings you peace and calm, such a meditation, reading, listening to soothing music, reading to your children, or watching a funny movie.
- Avoid relying on alcohol or other substances to help you cope.
- Focus your attention on the things over which you have influence and control.

Resources you may find helpful

The World Health Organization, Coronavirus Updates: https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/novel-coronavirus

The US Centers for Disease Control, including travel warnings: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

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- You may file a complaint, also known as a grievance:
  Discrimination Grievances, P.O. Box 14618, Lexington, KY 40512-4618
  If you need help filing a grievance, call **1-866-440-6556** or if you use a **TTY**, call **711**.
- You can also file a civil rights complaint with the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at **https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf**, or by mail or phone at **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, **1-800-368-1019**, **800-537-7697 (TDD)**.

Complaint forms are available at **https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html**.

Auxiliary aids and services, free of charge, are available to you.
1-866-440-6556 (TTY: 711)

Humana provides free auxiliary aids and services, such as qualified sign language interpreters, video remote interpretation, and written information in other formats to people with disabilities when such auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate.

Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you.
1-866-440-6556 (TTY: 711)

Español (Spanish): Llame al número arriba indicado para recibir servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.
繁體中文 (Chinese): 撥打上面的電話號碼即可獲得免費語言援助服務。
Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese): Xin gọi số điện thoại trên đây để nhận được các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí.
한국어 (Korean): 무료 언어 지원 서비스를 받으려면 위의 번호로 전화하십시오 .
Tagalog (Tagalog – Filipino): Tawagan ang numero sa itaas upang makatanggap ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad.
Русский (Russian): Позвоните по номеру, указанному выше, чтобы получить бесплатные услуги перевода.
Kreyòl Ayisyen (French Creole): Rele nimewo ki pi wo la a, pou resevwa sèvis èd pou lang ki gratis.
Français (French): Appelez le numéro ci-dessus pour recevoir gratuitement des services d'aide linguistique.
Polski (Polish): Aby skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej, proszę zadzwonić pod wyżej podany numer.
Português (Portuguese): Ligue para o número acima indicado para receber serviços linguísticos, grátis.
Italiano (Italian): Chiamare il numero sopra per ricevere servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti.
Deutsch (German): Wählen Sie die oben angegebene Nummer, um kostenlose sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zu erhalten.
日本語 (Japanese): 無料の言語支援サービスをご要望の場合は、上記の番号までお電話ください。
فارسی (Farsi)
برای دریافت تسهیلات زبانی بصورت رایگان با شماره فوق تماس بگیرید.
Diné Bizaad (Navajo): Wódahí béésh bee hani'í bee wolta'ígíí bich'į' hódíílnih éí bee t'áá jiik'eh saad bee áká'ánída'áwo'dęę niká'adoowoł.
العربية (Arabic)
الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم المبين أعلاه للحصول على خدمات مجانية للمساعدة بلغتك