

Everyone experiences anxiety from time to time. With a novel virus now impacting the world, it's understandable to be even more anxious. The following information may help.



# Coronavirus

## Anxiety

When fear and nervousness surrounding COVID-19 become overwhelming and keep us from doing everyday things, the anxiety may need to be addressed with the help of a mental health professional. You may experience some of the common symptoms below:

- Feelings of dread
- Restlessness or irritability
- Feeling on edge or jumpy
- Expecting the worst to happen
- Racing heartbeat
- Upset stomach
- Headaches, fatigue, insomnia
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty falling or staying sleep

The physical symptoms of anxiety can easily overlap with other medical conditions. It is important to talk with your doctor to rule out a medical illness. Your doctor may also recommend seeing a mental health professional.

Stress and relaxation techniques are also incredibly helpful in managing anxiety related to COVID-19. The following are common techniques to try:

### Deep breathing

The way we breathe is linked to how we feel. When we are relaxed, we breathe slowly. When we are anxious, we breathe more quickly. Try breathing slowly and steadily, inhaling through your nose and exhaling slowly through your mouth.

### Progressive muscle relaxation

Our bodies respond automatically to stress by becoming tense. Purposefully relaxing your body influences your mind to do the same. Try slowly tensing and relaxing different muscle groups in your body. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

### Mindfulness

Most anxiety we experience is focused on the past or the future. Try focusing on the here and now. Mindfulness encourages us to pay attention to the present moment without judging ourselves, others or circumstances. Try noticing your thoughts for 1 minute, but without attaching judgment to them. Let them pass by.

### Distraction

While ignoring a problem is never helpful, it can be helpful to simply take a break. Schedule time in your day to focus on activities that relax you. Try watching a movie, listening to a podcast, or going for a walk with a friend.

As always, your EAP is here for you and your family. Whether you are staying home or continuing your routine, there are a variety of ways to connect with your EAP including: by telephone 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341, online at [EAP4YOU.com](https://www.eap4you.com), through video, by live chat or text message. Reach out to us to learn more about the many options you have to receive support from your Employee Assistance Program.

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