

TAKING CONTROL OF STRESS AND ANXIETY

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- Anxiety is a normal and healthy emotion. Anxiety alerts us to threats and activates us to take steps to protect ourselves. Feeling some anxiety right now is a sign that your emotions are working just as they should.
- Anxiety overwhelms us when we overestimate dangers and underestimate our ability to keep ourselves safe. To contain anxiety, focus on how we protect ourselves and others: social distancing, regular hand washing, and not touching our faces.
- If you're having trouble sleeping, take time to wind down before going to bed. Don't think of sleep as a switch you can flip. Do think of a sleep as a destination you arrive to at the end of a leisurely stroll.
- Stress occurs when we need to adapt. Adapting to new conditions, good or bad, is inherently stressful. Much of the stress we are feeling right now comes from having to adapt very quickly to a totally new, if temporary, normal.
- Adopting new, temporary routines will help to reduce overall stress. Decisions are mentally taxing; having routines reduces the number of decisions we make each day. COVID-19 has upended many regular routines and increased decision-making stress.
- Major stressors, such as COVID-19, cause a cascade of microstressors, such as worries about how to get a haircut. Microstressors add up over time to become a significant source of stress. You can take the pandemic seriously while addressing microstressors. And tackling microstressors will be key to managing stress over the long run.
- When stress increases, we need and deserve more support. If you can't reduce your stress right now, work on the other side of the equation by seeking the help you need.

COPING DOS and DON'TS

DO	DON'T
Get emotional support by connecting with the people you love	Withdraw from relationships in order to avoid painful feelings.
Use happy distractions to get relief from stress and anxiety	Use substances to blunt emotional discomfort.
Take great care of yourself by getting enough sleep, exercising, eating well, and going outdoors.	Neglect your self-care by skimping on sleep, spending too much time online, eating poorly, and staying indoors.
Find ways to care for others. Doing so will help you to feel good, too.	Unload emotional distress by being hard on the people around you.