

Novel Coronavirus Infection (2019-nCoV)

Anxiety and Prevention

While the media coverage about the Coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan, China can make people feel on edge and anxious, education is the great equalizer. Instead of choosing to stress, which tends to make you more susceptible to illness, get busy finding out the facts about the virus and learn about how to prevent the spread of germs at home, school and work. Here are some tips for staying healthy, calm and informed.

Stay Healthy

These steps may help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses caused by many viral borne diseases:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; throw the tissue away immediately after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- If you get a flu-like illness, stay home from work, school, and social gatherings. In this way, you will help prevent others from catching your illness. Call your doctor and follow her or his advice on whether any further action is needed.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.

Stay Informed

- Knowing the facts is the best preparation. Identify sources you can count on for reliable information. If things appear to be getting worse, having accurate information will be critical.
- A source for updated information on the Coronavirus is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Look for information on your local and state government web sites.
- Talk to your local health care providers and public health officials.

Stay Calm

It is important to be cautious, heed warnings if they are issued, and do what you can to prepare and prevent, but there is no need to panic. Anxiety that you may be feeling is your body's natural way to motivate action, but once you have done what you can to prepare, it helps to let go of anxiety. Because stress affects your immune system, excessive worry will not help you, and at this point, there is no call for it.

If you find yourself stressing over the Coronavirus outbreak after you have taken every possible step to prepare, try the following stress management techniques:

- **Meditation:** Meditation is one of the most popular stress relievers for good reason: it brings far-reaching benefits.
- **Breathing Exercises:** Breathing exercises are simple and convenient. They are easy to learn and can be practiced anywhere.

- **Yoga:** Yoga can help support physical and emotional health in many ways.
- **Exercise:** If you find yourself absorbed watching the updates on television, turn it off and get outside. Working out or simply going for a walk is a great way to blow off steam, keep your body healthy, and relieve stress at the same time.
- **Listen to Music:** Music can be a great stress reliever, and putting on some soothing music can calm you.
- **Talk to a Professional:** If you feel persistently anxious about this or anything in your life, the anxiety is interfering with your regular activities, and regular stress management techniques are not helping, it is a good idea to talk to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselor or call your doctor.

Workplace Prevention

Managers can prepare their employees by educating them about how to help prevent the spread of viruses and bacteria in the workplace. Employees should know and practice routine hygiene measures such as:

- Cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash their hands often. Proper hand washing technique includes washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. If you suspect you have been exposed to the Coronavirus, call your personal health care provider on the telephone and follow instructions on where to go for further evaluation

Government Resources

The following are links to government resources to help you and your family through this time:

CDC Website for the Novel Coronavirus Infection in Wuhan, China

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Healthfinder.gov: Manage Stress

https://healthfinder.gov/healthtopics/category/health-conditions-and-diseases/heart-health/manage-stress#take-action_2

Latest News

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/dpk/diseases-and-conditions/coronavirus/coronavirus-2020.html>

FEDERAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

(800) 222-0364 | (888) 262-7848 (TTY)

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