

COVID-19: Managing Stress & Anxiety



Your Health Matters

Westfield Regional Health Department

425 East Broad Street, Westfield, NJ 07090

P. 908-789-4070

www.westfieldnj.gov/health

Stress and Coping

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include

- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19
- Children and teens
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. For more information click on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)

Things you can do to support yourself

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

Reduce Stress in Yourself and Others

For Parents

- Not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. [Click for some common changes to watch for and things you can do to support your child.](#)

For Responders

- Responding to COVID-19 can take an emotional toll on you. [Click for things you can do to reduce secondary traumatic stress \(STS\) reactions.](#)

For people who have been released from quarantine

- Being separated from others if a healthcare provider thinks you may have been exposed to COVID-19 can be stressful, even if you do not get sick. [Everyone feels differently coming out of quarantine.](#)
- To talk with a mental health professional call the NJ Dept. of Human Services "warm line": 877-294-4357

Click on the CDC's [Manage Anxiety and Stress](#) website for more resources