

How to manage anxiety to news reports and the situation created by the expansion of the coronavirus



New reports about COVID-19 are becoming more widespread and are making some people anxious. Here are some tips to help you manage your anxiety, put news reports in perspective and maintain a positive outlook.

1. **Keep things in perspective.**

In other words, being able to be objective and consider all possible alternatives as coverage increases and you receive information from family, friends or social media. Remind yourself that most people who contract COVID-19 will only experience mild symptoms. Work is being done to help people who may be more vulnerable to the coronavirus, such as senior citizens and those with underlying health conditions. As coverage increases, it's important to take the necessary precautions to keep your family and loved ones healthy.

2. Get the facts.

Adopt a more analytical approach as you follow news reports about the coronavirus. Constant media coverage about the coronavirus can keep us in a heightened state of anxiety. Try to limit related media exposure and instead seek out factual information from reliable sources.

Offer security and control to your loved ones, clearly indicating what they can do: stay home, and comply with the regulations and hygiene recommendations established by the authorities. **They will feel that they are part of the solution.**



TOSE EN EL
CODO



LÍMPIATE BIEN
LAS MANOS



MANTÉN LA
DISTANCIA



QUÉDATE
EN CASA

You may also find useful, reputable information from official source or even your family physician.

3. Maintaining your mental health during social isolation

The challenges associated with social distancing and isolation, are leading some people to experience feelings of anxiety, boredom, frustration and fear.

You can use this tips or strategies to maintain good mental health during this time of social distancing and isolation:

- Maintain a positive outlook during periods of self-isolation reminding yourself that this period of self-isolation is temporary, thinking of the benefits of self-isolation to the wider, including slowing the spread of the virus and protecting those most vulnerable in your community, and remaining mindful that medical and scientific experts are following strict protocols to contain the virus and treat those affected.
- Maintain relationships with family, friends and colleagues (e.g., via telephone or video technologies) but not overusing social media as you are likely to be exposed to negative news and get drawn into doomsday discussions.
- Try to keep your mind busy with activities you enjoy such as reading, watching movies, exercising etc.
- Structure your day when working from home – allocate specific work hours, schedule breaks and set-up a dedicated workspace where distractions are limited.

Practicing self-care: relaxation, meditation and mindfulness to give your body a chance to settle and readjust to a calm state. The use of technologies can help you. Links with activities that you can do alone or with your family:

- MOOC UMA Mindfulness. Cómo meditar en 1 minuto! (inglés subtulado):
https://youtu.be/spqAlb5__6Y
- Yoga para mejorar el Sistema Inmunitario (30 min):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvuELJIG1Fw>
- Clase de yoga: Yoga dinámico (30 minutos):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a376zRhSXXI&t=454s>
- Mindfulness para niños. Meditación de la sonrisa interior:
<https://vimeo.com/363163113>
- Sun Salutations & Yoga with Animals: <https://youtu.be/8oGR5xucItI>
- YOGA for children - The postures of animals:
<https://www.youtubekids.com/watch?v=jMOZz7GHaog&hl=es>

4. Communicate with your children.

Discuss the news coverage of the coronavirus with honest and age-appropriate information. Parents can also help allay distress by focusing children on routines and schedules. Remember that children will observe your behaviors and emotions for cues on how to manage their own feelings during this time. Talk to them about your concerns, this will always be better than anything that they could ever imagine or suppose.

You may want to limit how much media they consume to help keep their anxiety in check.

For Middle-schooler it will be more appropriate to get them to participate more actively in setting their schedules and managing their daily tasks. Creating a schedule that they can independently follow, setting daily goals regarding school and housework, and setting boundaries around your work time will be helpful. Finally, discuss appropriate screen time limits, bedtimes, and ways for your child to stay physically active and connected with friends and peer groups, even if virtually.

Additional information:

- Recommendations to explain the coronavirus-Covid-19 outbreak to children (Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Madrid):
http://www.infocop.es/view_article.asp?id=8626
- In this link you can find a story to explain to children the Coronavirus and other possible viruses Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Madrid):
https://issuu.com/colegiooficialpsicologosmadrid/docs/cuento_rosa_contra_el_virus_alta
- Another document adapted for children, in English:
<https://youtu.be/FqaXBtSaiUE>



5. Keep connected.

Maintaining social networks can foster a sense of normality and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress. You can maintain these connections without increasing your risk of getting the virus by talking on the phone, texting or chatting with people on social media platforms. Feel free to share useful information you find on government websites with your friends and family. It will help them deal with their own anxiety.

6. Seek additional help.

Individuals who feel an overwhelming nervousness, a lingering sadness, or other prolonged reactions that adversely affect their job performance or interpersonal relationships should consult with a trained and experienced mental health professional. Psychologists and other appropriate mental health providers can help people deal with extreme stress. These professionals work with individuals to help them find constructive ways to manage adversity.

The Official College of Psychologists offers psychological attention to the community from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., every day of the week. PHONE: 960 45 02 30.

Servicio de Orientación Psicopedagógica
ESCUELA EUROPEA DE ALICANTE