

How to cope with stress related to novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

It can feel stressful and overwhelming during an event like the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and we can all be affected differently.

You might feel overwhelmed by the information, conversations and the increased levels of stress in your community.

It can also be hard to know what information to trust, especially in a situation where things are changing so quickly. However, it is important that we learn to manage our stress before it turns to more severe anxiety and panic.

This information sheet outlines some useful strategies to help cope with the stress or anxiety experienced as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.



Learn the facts

Try to limit related media exposure and instead seek out factual information from reliable sources such as the Australian Government Department of Health, or other trusted organisations such as the World Health Organisation or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

It can be helpful to take a break from the 24-hour news cycle.



Keep things in perspective

Rather than imagining the worst-case scenario and worrying about it, remind yourself:

- The actual number of confirmed cases of coronavirus in Australia is extremely low
- Illness due to coronavirus infection is usually mild and most people recover without needing specialised treatment
- Even if the worst were to happen, you may be underestimating your ability to cope.

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Sonder helps people to live better lives by providing high quality care, health and support services. Sonder's range of services include mental health counselling, addiction services, Aboriginal health and employment support.

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Better Care Better Health



Take reasonable precautions

Being proactive by following basic hygiene principles can keep your anxiety at bay. The World Health Organization recommends to:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell until you fully recover
- Seek medical care early if you have a fever, cough or experience breathing difficulties.



Practice self-care

Engage in activities that promote a sense of calm and feeling grounded (use of alcohol and other drugs can be counterproductive with this). Do things that make you feel physically and emotionally safe.

Keep up social connections with those who are helpful to your wellbeing. Call, message or video-call friends and family members.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle to strengthen your immune system. Eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly and get good quality sleep. Try practising relaxation or meditation to give your mind and body a break.

MORE SUPPORT

Sonder's Walk-in After-hours Mental Health Service is operating as normal. No appointment needed.

When Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays

Time Operating from 5 - 10 pm

Where headspace Edinburgh North

For more information about this service, call Sonder on **(08) 8209 0700**

If calling after-hours: **(08) 8209 0711**

**Lifeline 24 Hour
Crisis Counselling**
13 11 14

**Lived Experience Telephone
Support Service (LETTS)**
1800 013 755

LGBTIQ Helpline
1800 184 527

Mental Health Triage
13 14 65

**If you require emergency
assistance, please call:**

Emergency Services
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Tips for talking with children about the coronavirus

Don't be afraid to talk about the coronavirus with children. It is important that they can speak to you about their own concerns.

You can help to reduce their anxiety by:

- Speaking to them in a calm manner. Manage your own anxieties before bringing up the subject
- Explaining that it is normal to feel worried when new and stressful situations arise. Reassure them that you will work together to manage whatever comes up in the future and that you are there to listen to them.
- Giving them a sense of control by explaining what they can do to stay safe (e.g. washing hands regularly). Think of some ideas of how together as a family you can help others in this time (e.g. picking up groceries for a neighbour).
- Keeping up a routine and focusing on things that are in their control, such as school work and piano practice.