



## Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers tips to cope with anxiety and stress during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak

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As news of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) evolves, you may find yourself growing increasingly anxious or stressed. If so, you are not alone. Your EAP is here to provide you and your household members support.

Here are a few tips to help cope from Dr. Jessica Chaudhary, one of Anthem's medical directors:

- **Be vigilant, take precautions, and maintain perspective to reduce any undue stress.**
- **Stay calm and carry on.** Maintain a routine and continue your normal daily activities, but be sure to practice prevention where you can.
  - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when washing isn't an option.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Stay home when you're sick. That includes staying home from work, school, errands and travel.
  - Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
  - If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as phones, keyboards and doorknobs.
  - Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, drink a lot of fluids and eat nutritious food.

- **Stick to reputable sites for your information.** Try to limit contact with sources that tend to fuel your worry. Avoid using the internet to search your symptoms, and do not panic at the first sign of illness. Speak to your primary care doctor if you have any questions.
- **Use coping skills.** Try and focus on relaxing more. You can exercise, practice yoga, meditate, use deep breathing techniques or talk to a friend or a therapist.
- **Stay informed.** Get information from reliable sources like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) or the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)). It's important to limit the time you spend reading or listening to the news. If you feel like the news is becoming repetitive, it might be a sign that you are oversaturating yourself.
- **Be prepared.** It's okay to make sure you have enough bottled water, toilet paper, nonperishable food and any necessary medicines. However, if you find that you are buying large quantities of supplies and you are starting to run out of storage room, you may be overpreparing due to panic.
- **Ask for help.** Monitor yourself, your emotions and your internal responses. If you feel like you cannot stop worrying, or if you notice any of the concerning behaviors mentioned above, seek help. Your EAP can connect you to a therapist and other resources that can help you.

Get the support you need by calling your EAP toll-free number.

**(800) 999-7222**

**AnthemEAP.com**

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Jessica Chaudhary is a board-certified psychiatrist who completed her medical training at the University of Washington School of Medicine, her residency in psychiatry at Yale University, and a fellowship in psychosomatic medicine at Harvard University. She specializes in psychiatric disorders and has treated patients with anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorders, substance use disorders, and bipolar disorders, among other psychiatric conditions. She is a medical director here at Anthem.

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