

It is normal to be scared, distressed, or angry when there is a new infectious disease outbreak in our communities. Fear is a natural response to the unknown, and we are still figuring out how COVID-19 will affect our families and our communities. We need to be careful that fear is not what we spread across our communities. When we take actions that help us be prepared, healthy, and informed, we can spread calm instead.

Beware turning fear and anger toward people rather than the disease itself

The risk of COVID-19 is not at all connected with race, ethnicity, or nationality. **Blaming others will not help fight the illness** or its spread. When people use their fear to justify unfair treatment of others, we negatively impact our communities, our loved ones, and ourselves.

Ask yourself:

1. Would I think or do the same thing if this was a different infectious disease, like the flu?
2. Does what I'm doing make people safer, or does it create more fear or harm?

Talk with kids about their fears

Kids will have questions about coronavirus, and they are sensitive to the stress and fear of adults around them. Taking care of your stress will help kids reduce their own fear. Resources are available to help adults talk with kids about COVID-19.

- [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [WHO Infographic Helping Children Cope](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists Helping Kids Cope](#)

Take actions that help release fear and stress energy

Recognize when you are experiencing fear and stress. Identify what you are afraid of. Figure out if you can address that fear right now.

- Practice actions that protect yourself and others.
- Find out when and where you can find accurate information.
- Share information with people in your family and networks, especially those who might have difficulty understanding or being reached.
- Find a balance.
- Find a balance between getting timely information and limiting your media intake to do things that put you in a positive mood or that you can control.
- Make plans that help you and people around you feel safer, more calm and more prepared.
- [FEMA: Guidance for COVID-19 preparedness](#)

- [CDC: Getting your household ready for COVID-19](#)
- Talk to others who you trust.
- Find someone who will learn with you and who will help you watch your fear. You can do the same for them and spread calm to others.
- Stick with healthy, normal routines.
- Strengthen your body's immune system and flush fear from your body-- physical activity, calming activities, healthy diet, and good sleep.

Practice kindness and acknowledge we're all sacrificing

COVID-19 is causing a lot of disruption in our lives. Events and celebrations we have been planning for months are canceled, and things that we care about are being put on hold. It's OK to be sad or frustrated, but there are things we can all do to help ourselves and our neighbors through this trying time.

Social connection is important to our individual and collective well-being. Distancing our bodies doesn't mean we have to be distanced at heart.

- Check in with your friends and family by phone.
- Make a plan with your neighborhood or faith group, by which people can signal they need support.
- Enjoy a book you have been waiting to read. Invite others to read it and discuss it on social media (maybe others will join!).
- Create a group who can go shopping for people at higher risk for serious illness.
- Schedule a time for everyone to watch the same movie or TV show at their own homes.
- Connect with nature: Go outside to enjoy a walk with your dog. Go on a family bike ride or hike. Work in your garden.
- Order food for takeout or curbside pick-up.

Know you can always talk to someone

Colorado Crisis Services offers free, confidential, professional, 24/7 support.

- Call 1-844-493-8255
- Text "TALK" to 38255

The Disaster Distress Helpline offers help and support for any distress you or someone you care about may be feeling related to a disaster.

- Call 1-800-985-5990
- Text 'TalkWithUs' to 66746
- TTY for Deaf / Hard of Hearing: 1-800-846-8517
- Spanish-speakers: Text "Hablanos" to 66746