



DUNCAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Building on Faith, Family & Community

Coronavirus: Managing Stress & Anxiety

March 30, 2020

7 Tips to Manage Anxiety and Worry

Youtube: [7 Tips to manage anxiety about coronavirus](#) (3:51)

1. **Educate yourself.** On what the virus is, what the signs and symptoms are and the preventative measures. Youtube: [Coronavirus: What is it?](#) (3 minutes)
2. **Keep perspective.** Though it is important to stay informed it is also important to keep perspective. Do not spend too much time checking the news channels. Remember to also spend time on other important and positive things in your life.
3. **Don't inflate the risk.** When something's new and there are unknowns about it, it can seem very scary. This is our brain's normal reaction to a threat (our fight or flight response) and considering the amount of attention a new threat like this gets, it's easy for the risk to be inflated. Take the time to consider the actual risk to you. Read our article on Coronavirus and the risks to Canadians.
4. **Take precautions.** Once you've determined what the recommended precautions are, incorporate those into your regular routine. Right now, the recommendations are typical flu protocols: wash your hands regularly with soap and water; stay home if you feel sick; avoid those who are presenting with flu-like symptoms; and, maintain regular health routines like sleeping enough, eating healthy and exercising.
5. **Stay connected.** Having a support network of people to talk to when you're feeling anxious can help to keep you grounded and remind you to keep the perspective you need.
6. **Use your coping skills.** If you experience anxiety in other areas of your life remember to engage in the practices that help manage your anxiety levels, for example, engaging in regular mindfulness practice.

7. **Seek extra help.** If you're still struggling with your anxiety or experiencing panic that is affecting your ability to maintain your regular activities, you may consider seeking additional support.

How to Manage Anxiety about COVID-19 that becomes Overwhelming and Turns into Panic

Youtube: [How to manage anxiety about coronavirus that becomes overwhelming and turns into panic \(2:39\)](#)

There are a number of things that can help prevent or reduce the chances of having a panic attack. These include the following:

1. **Practice mindful breathing** exercises every day.
2. **Regular exercise** helps to manage stress levels, release tension, improve mood and boost confidence.
3. **Eat regular meals** to stabilize your blood sugar levels.
4. **Avoid caffeine, alcohol and smoking** – these can make panic attacks worse.
5. Psychological therapies like **cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** can identify and change the negative thought patterns. It's these thought patterns that are feeding your panic attacks.

[How to Manage Anxiety about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) that Turns into Panic](#)

Talking with Children about Public Health Emergencies

1. **Youtube:** [Talking with Children about Public Health Emergencies like Coronavirus \(3:31\)](#)
2. First, it's important to **ensure the conversations are age-appropriate**. The types of frank conversations we can have with high school and university-aged children are not the same as the conversations we'd have with those pre-school or elementary-aged.

3. When it comes to younger children, **don't overshare** and burden them with information or worries. But do answer the questions they ask. Be honest but conscious of age and learning level (the same way you might with answering questions about where babies come from).
4. Children are curious and want to learn about the world around them so they are bound to ask questions. **If you don't know the answer, tell them you will find out.** Or depending on the nature of the question and the age of the child consider researching the answer together. Even though children are curious, feeling secure and safe is important to their psychological well-being. Be honest but always attempt to reassure them of their safety.
5. Finally, help educate children about their health and how to be conscious of staying healthy and preventing diseases. **Identifying actionable things** we can do individually to keep ourselves safe and healthy can help all of us manage anxiety, fear, and helplessness. This is also true for children regardless of whether or not they are able to accurately identify these emotions. Make sure these things are; a) something that is within their control, b) something they can do on their own or mostly on their own, c) realistic and attainable.

Up-to-date Information about the Coronavirus

For the latest information, visit:

- The Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC) page on COVID-19: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>
- BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool: <https://covid19.thrive.health/>
- COVID-19 News & Events At Interior Health: <https://news.interiorhealth.ca/covid-19/>
- BC Ministry of Health: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-covid-19>
- BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/information-on-novel-coronavirus>
- Call the Public Health Agency of Canada's COVID-19 Information line: [1-833-784-4397](tel:1-833-784-4397)

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