

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic may be stressful for people and communities. Increased fear and anxiety, isolation and feeling disconnected can cause strong emotions in both adults and children. Protecting one's mental health is very important at this time.

TIPS TO COPE:

- **Stay informed:** Rely on trusted information sources, like your [state](#) and [local](#) health department and [CDC](#).
- **Avoid too much exposure to news:** Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories or going on social media, especially if it is upsetting you.
- **Take care of your body:** Eat well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep. Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and excessive caffeine.
- **Take medications as prescribed:** Talk to your prescriber if you have any issues with your medication.
- **Connect with others:** Use phone calls or online chat and video options, like Skype or Google Hangouts, if you are in isolation. Share your feelings with a friend or family member.
- **Engage in pleasurable and meaningful activities:** Read a book, watch a movie, play games with your children, or work on a craft project. Depend on the activities that you've previously enjoyed or try something new.
- **Develop a self-care plan:** Identify your self-care needs and include activities that make you feel safe and supported. Examples may include [relaxation techniques](#), positive self-talk, and social support. Review your self-care plan with your mental health provider or a trusted friend.
- **Go outside:** If you have access to the outdoors, take a walk or visit a local park. Be sure to maintain a six-foot distance between yourself and others.
- **Look out for these common signs of distress:**
 - Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear
 - Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images
 - Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes
 - Worsening of chronic health problems
 - Anger or short temper
 - Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- **Seek help when needed:** If the above distress signs impact your daily activities for several days or weeks, talk to a counselor or doctor.
 - Contact [Oakland Community Health Network's](#) Access line at 248.464.6363 for mental health and substance use disorder recovery resources or call the number on the back of your insurance card.

We are in this together, and help is available. If you're having thoughts of suicide, feeling alone and struggling, call or text the Common Ground Resource and Crisis Helpline at 1-800-231-1127 or chat online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.commongroundhelps.org. Visit oakgov.com/covid for the latest updates.