

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING DURING COVID-19

Stay Calm. Have a Plan.



Maintain a Positive Outlook

- Limit your exposure to graphic news stories
- Get accurate, timely information from reliable sources
- Focus on positive things. Structure fun, and/or absorbing activities into your day, such as exercise, reading, writing, organizing... and calling your friends
- Maintain your normal daily routine, if possible
- Exercise, eat well and rest
- Find comfort in your spiritual and personal beliefs
- Keep a sense of humor
- Share your concerns with others

What Might Happen

- Workers may stay at home and use computers and telephones to continue their jobs.
- People with the virus, and their family, may be asked to stay home.
- You may need to reorganize your life to care for loved ones or to receive care.
- You may lose income if your workplace closes or you become ill.
- Access to food and other household goods may become limited.

Pandemic flu is a global outbreak that occurs when a new influenza virus appears, and many people have little or no immunity. It affects people of all ages and backgrounds.

In this pamphlet is information that can help you prepare for a pandemic flu situation, will help you understand your reactions and offers suggestions on how to maintain a positive mental health outlook.

Get Help:

Find information on local resources in response to COVID-19 at:

<https://www.como.gov/health/gethelp-coronavirus/>

Give Help:

Find ways to help your community for COVID-19 at:

<https://comohelps.org/>

Preparation

Federal, State and local health agencies are making plans to prepare for, respond to and contain an outbreak of pandemic flu. Research into disaster preparation shows that having a family emergency plan, and a family emergency kit, is a significant help, while also providing peace of mind. We encourage communities, businesses, organizations, families and individuals to plan for a pandemic influenza outbreak.

A Family Plan

Here are some suggestions for preparing a family emergency plan and kit. Use this list as a starting point, and then customize it to your family's needs. If you have children or are responsible for caring for elderly relatives, make alternative care plans. Schools as well as child and elderly day care providers may be closed.

Make a list of helpful email addresses and phone numbers: schools, doctors, etc. Be prepared to ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your family's regular prescription drugs. Talk with family members and loved ones not living in your home about how they would be cared for if they got sick or what will be needed to care for them.

Store a supply of water, food and medical supplies. If you have the flu, you'll be able to stay home and limit your contact with others. If you're healthy, it'll be comforting to have these items on hand to limit your outdoor activity. There isn't an established time line to determine the amount of each item to have stored. A good starting point would be two weeks.

Food and Non-Perishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, tuna, fruits, vegetables and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Dried fruit
- Bottled water
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food
- Games such as crossword puzzles, a deck of cards, board games, etc.

Medical, Health and Emergency Supplies

- Prescribed medical supplies
- Prescribed psychotropics
- Soap and water or alcohol-based hand wash
- Medicines for fever such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids for electrolytes
- Cleansing agents/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener

Get Accurate Information

Get information you can trust from Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services website:

<https://www.como.gov/coronavirus/>

You can call the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services statewide public hotline for questions regarding COVID-19 at:
(877) 435-8411

Psychological First Aid

Through family emergency planning, staying calm, and focusing on the well-being of others in the community, you can be confident normalcy will return to your life. Here are additional tips for managing the stress brought on by pandemic flu:

Children

- Involve the child in preparation of the family emergency kit
- Provide predictable bedtime routines
- Avoid unnecessary separations
- Monitor media exposure to disaster trauma
- Encourage expression through play activities
- Give additional attention and consideration
- Provide structured but undemanding home chores and activities
- Encourage verbal and play expression of thoughts and feelings
- Encourage expression regarding losses

Teens

- Encourage discussion of their pandemic flu experiences with peers and adults
- Avoid insistence on discussion of feelings with parents
- Encourage indoor physical activities
- Rehearse family safety measures
- Encourage communication with friends via phone, email and text messaging

Older Adults

- Provide listening and an opportunity to talk in detail about pandemic flu experiences
- Assist with prioritizing and problem solving
- Provide information on pandemic flu stress and coping
- Provide orienting information
- Assist in re-establishing social contacts
- Encourage discussion of pandemic losses and expression of emotions
- Engage providers of transportation, meal programs and home visits as needed

Most Important: You

During and after pandemic flu, your normal routine will be altered. Do your best to adjust and move on. It is important to maintain structure in your life. It is also important to pay attention to your own feelings and to take care of your own emotional needs. You are then better able to help friends and family members handle their concerns.

Friends Make a Difference

There are many available options for maintaining a positive mental health outlook. If you are anxious, talk to someone who can help. This may be your doctor, a family member, friend, clergy member, teacher or mental health professional.

If you know someone who has the flu, reach out to them. Make some time to talk and help mitigate any guilt they may be feeling about the stress in their life. If you or someone you know is having a hard time managing their emotions, plan to make regular calls to raise their spirits. If anyone in your family has a pre-existing condition, call them to make certain they are doing okay.

Four Areas of Personal Well-Being That Can Be Affected

Physical

When under stress over time, our bodies react. Be alert to whether these symptoms have changed noticeably from the way you felt before. Be sure to see a doctor about any significant changes as many stress reactions mimic major physical disorders and diseases.

Headaches, tiredness, increased pulse, high blood pressure, changes in appetite, unexplained aches or pains, trouble sleeping, sleeping too much, stomach aches

Mental

The stress of pandemic flu may affect your ability to think clearly, and make it harder to pay attention, solve problems or remember. These are normal reactions in times of high stress. They are signals to you to take action and care for yourself.

Trouble concentrating, problems at work or school, memory problems, troubling thoughts, concern about health issues

Emotional

Often our emotional reactions are the most confusing. We may laugh unexpectedly or yell in anger. We may feel irritable and grumpy. We also may feel intense fear or have unexplained sadness and crying. Always remember that all emotions are normal.

Panic, anxiety, distrust, fear, anger, irritability, sadness, depression, blame, feeling overwhelmed, increased stress

Behavioral

Some people burn "anxious energy" by pacing, fidgeting and other nervous habits. But some behaviors triggered by stressful events need to be stopped as they tend to make the situation worse. These things include increased smoking and drinking, blaming others, yelling, swearing, hitting and throwing things.

Withdrawal, substance abuse, aggression

COVID-19 Mental Health Resources

United Way 211 system provides immediate information or help 24/7 to connect people experiencing need with information on available community resources.

1-800-427-4626 or 2-1-1
www.211helps.org

Burrell Behavioral Health Crisis Assist Team provides immediate 24/7 response to individuals who have a mental health crisis or are having thoughts of suicide.

(800) 395-2132

United Health Care (UHC) is making available a free support line for anyone experiencing emotional stress or anxiety with COVID-19, even for non-UHC members. It's available 24/7, free, and confidential.

(886) 342-6892

Compass Health Network - Behavioral Health Services can provide a mental health assessment and recommendations.

(884) 853-8937

FACE of Boone County serves Boone County children/youth 19 years or younger and their families. FACE can help families narrow their options of services based on their top needs. Services are free through the Boone County Children's Services Fund.

(573) 771-3223

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA)

Disaster Distress Helpline for free mental health support 24/7:

1-800-985-5990
or text TalkWithUs or Hablanos to
66756