

Dealing with Coronavirus Anxiety

Is it okay to feel anxious about Coronavirus?



It is normal to feel anxious or worried about the Coronavirus.



It can be difficult to stop worrying about Coronavirus when we hear that it is a global pandemic.

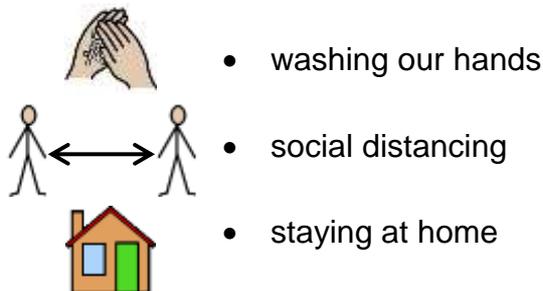
It can make us anxious when we hear how dangerous it is.

Did you know:



Anxiety can be a helpful emotion to have during these times.

Being anxious about Coronavirus can help us make sure we follow the Government rules about:



- washing our hands

- social distancing

- staying at home

This is helpful and helps to keep everyone safe.



At other times anxiety can be very difficult to experience.

Some people might worry that something bad might happen because of Coronavirus. Staying at home and not mixing with other people can be difficult and lonely.



Anxious thoughts might increase.

Some people might even think very scary thoughts such as “I am going to die”.

What do I need to know?



Anxiety is an important emotion to have.
It is an automatic response to danger.

For example;

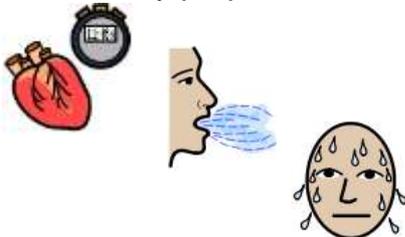


When we hear a dog growling our brain thinks “I’m in danger”
and sends signals to the body to prepare for a threat.

This is known as the Fight, Flight or Freeze response.

Our body then starts to prepare by pumping more oxygen to the blood and muscles
to prepare it to either fight (push the dog away) or flight (run as fast as you can).

As our body prepares we may experience these physical changes in the body:



- Increased heart rate
- Breathing fast
- Increased sweating

When we worry about things that don’t actually require these physical changes in the
body the brain will still send signals to the body to prepare.

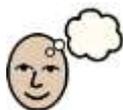
This can be the problem when worrying about Coronavirus and we can experience
these uncomfortable changes in our body.

The signs of anxiety can be similar to those of Coronavirus.

They include:



- Shortness of breath
- Feeling flushed
- Tightness in chest



Being aware of changes in your body is good. Keep this in mind if you
are anxious about Coronavirus and experience any of these signs.



However if you think you might have Coronavirus please ensure you
still follow the guidelines outlined by the Government & NHS.



You can the NHS on ‘111’ for advice.

What can I do to help manage my anxiety?



“**Controlled breathing**” is something lots of people do that helps them when they feel anxious.

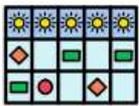
It can be used anywhere and at any time.

There are simple steps to follow:

- Breathe **in** while counting for four seconds 1... 2... 3... 4...
- **Hold** your breath for 2 seconds 1... 2...
- Breathe **out** for four seconds 1... 2... 3... 4...
- **Wait** four seconds and then **repeat**

Other simple tips to help reduce anxiety levels:

Set new routines for the day



- Set your alarm clock for the same time each day.
- Get washed and dressed. Do not stay in your pyjamas.
- Have set times for your meals such as Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner
- Plan and complete tasks between your meal times

Distraction



- Try to focus your mind on other topics.
- Write down tasks you would like to do. Ideas are organising the cupboard, weeding the garden, sorting old clothes. Make a list.
- Do something you enjoy. Maybe read a book, complete a puzzle or watch a new TV series or film.

Avoiding programmes that can cause us to feel anxious is a good idea!

Limit Social Media



- Limit your Social Media use.
- Reduce the number of stories you read about Coronavirus.
- Focus on the positive information. Look at how many people have survived from this virus.

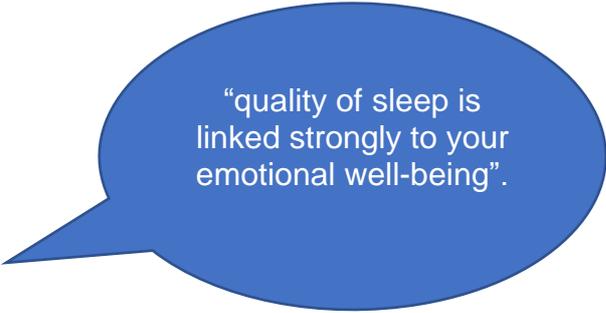
Positive Thinking



You are fit and healthy. Focus on this fact.
Stay fit and healthy by following the guidelines outlined by the Government and NHS.

Sleeping

Experts say



“quality of sleep is linked strongly to your emotional well-being”.



This means it is important to get a good nights sleep!

Here is a list of practical things that help:

- Exercise during the day. Don't exercise too late at night.
- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day. 7 days a week.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and big meals before going to bed.
- Set up a night time routine. For example; have a bath, brush teeth, get pyjamas on.
- Do something relaxing at night time. You could read a book, take a bath or meditate.
- Keep your bedroom cool. Open a window during the day.
- Stay off your gadgets (mobile phone, tablet, gaming device) for at least one hour before going to bed.

Look after yourself



If you are concerned about how you feel then please contact your GP or out of hours service. They can help and support you.