

# Coping With Stress and Supporting Mental Health

## During the COVID-19 situation

Feelings of stress and anxiety are common reactions to hearing of the COVID-19 situation. While such reactions are understandable, they can also impact mental and physical health. It is important to recognize stress reactions in yourself and others, and be intentional about coping with stress in constructive ways.

### Understanding Common Reactions:

While everyone reacts differently to such a stressful situation, common reactions include the following:

- **Anxiety and Worry** about your own health
- **Apprehension** about school, work, and money
- **Concern** for the well-being of others
- **Uncertainty or frustration** about how long this situation will go on, and about the future
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Anger** at the situation
- **Symptoms of Depression**, such as hopelessness, disruption in sleep, and changes in appetite
- **Desire to use alcohol or drugs** to cope
- **Signs of acute stress**, such as intrusive distressing memories, nightmares, being easily startled
- Be mindful of your assumptions about others. Someone who has a cough or a fever does not necessarily have coronavirus. Self-awareness is important in not stigmatizing others in our community

### Sources of Support

**Welltrack:** Self-help app for students at [montana.welltrack.com](http://montana.welltrack.com)

**Counseling and Psychological Services:** Call us at (406) 994-4531 or learn more online at: [Montana.edu/counseling](http://Montana.edu/counseling)

**\*\*For immediate help managing intense emotions or thoughts of suicide, consider contacting:**

**The Bozeman Help Center: (406) 586-3333**

**The National Suicide Prevention Line: 1-800-8255 or text 741-741**

### Ways of Relieving Stress:

- **Keep things in perspective:** Some anxiety is normal to experience. Educate yourself on risks and precautions, and recognize that media coverage may exaggerate some dangers.
- **Get the facts** by accessing credible sources such as:
  - ⇒ <http://www.montana.edu/health/coronavirus/index.html>
  - ⇒ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov>
  - ⇒ World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/en>
- **Connect with others:** Maintaining social networks can foster a sense of normalcy and are valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress.
- **Drink water and eat healthy foods**
- **Laugh:** Watch your favorite comedies, engage in activities that bring you joy.
- **Avoid** excessive use of caffeine and alcohol
- **Prioritize getting enough sleep**
- **Exercise** to the extent you are able, get outside if possible.
- **Engage in relaxing activities** such as deep breathing, yoga, pleasure reading, etc.



**Counseling & Psychological Services**  
University Health Partners

211 Swingle Hall | 406-994-4531 | [montana.edu/counseling](http://montana.edu/counseling)