

Be Red Cross Ready

Prepare so you can protect.



Coping with Staying at Home During COVID-19

Local and state officials are using stay-at-home (sometimes called safer-at-home, or shelter-at-home) orders to slow the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). By staying home, we can help minimize how many people are getting sick at the same time, protect those at higher risk of severe illness and prevent our health care system from getting overwhelmed.

Unfortunately, staying at home can disrupt our routines and make everyday activities, such as work and caring for loved ones, challenging. These changes, on top of the general uncertainty around this pandemic, can create feelings of stress, fear, and nervousness. These feelings are normal, and people typically bounce back after difficult times.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Know the COVID-19 symptoms and additional steps you may be able to take to protect yourself by visiting the CDC website at [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus). Use this tip sheet to help you cope with stress and support others during this emergency.

What does Staying at Home Mean?

- Staying at home means that you remain at home, and only go out to purchase essential supplies, visit medical professionals or leave during an emergency.
 - If you need to go out, wear a cloth face covering and practice physical distancing by keeping 6 feet between you and others.
 - Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unable to remove it without help. Detailed information on cloth face coverings is available at: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

It is normal for you to have these types of feelings right now:

- Fear about running out of essential supplies.
- Anxiety, particularly about being separated from loved ones.
- Uncertainty about how long you will need to stay at home.
- Concerns for your physical safety and that of others.
- Fear of getting sick.
- Guilt about not being able to fulfill responsibilities, such as work, parenting or caring for dependents.
- Boredom or isolation.
- Thoughts of blame, worry or fear.
- Worry about loss of income.
- Fear of being stigmatized or labeled if you become sick.

Coping Tips

- **Stay connected** with loved ones through video calls, phone calls, texts, or social media.
- **Remain informed with accurate information from trusted sources.** Avoid social media accounts and news outlets that promote fear or rumors.
- **Monitor your physical health needs** and those of your loved ones. Eat healthy foods, and drink plenty of water.
- Unless you are showing signs of illness or have tested positive for COVID-19, **going outside to exercise and walk pets is okay. In public, wear a cloth face covering and practice physical distancing by keeping 6 feet between you and others.**
- **Hold an image in your mind of the best possible outcome.** Make a list of your personal strengths and use these to help both yourself and others stay emotionally strong.
- **If you are religious or spiritual, follow practices at home** that provide you with comfort and emotional strength.
- **Learn how to build resilience and support yourself and others during this crisis by completing a free online course from the American Red Cross on [Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19](#).**

Help Others

- Reach out to **older adults or people with chronic health conditions** and offer to help. For example, offer to pick up groceries, medications, and other essential supplies. Check in with them regularly over the phone. When delivering supplies, practice physical distancing by keeping at least 6 feet away from them and wear a cloth face covering. Leave items at the door, and refrain from entering their home.
- Talk to your **children** and explain why this is happening and how long it might last. Use language that is normal and consistent with how you usually communicate. Be creative and think of fun activities that will occupy their time. Keep a schedule, set appropriate limits, and maintain usual rules when possible.
- Take care of your **pets**, which can be an essential part of your support system. Like people, pets react to changes in their environment and routine, so their behaviors may change, as well. Keep track of their well-being and take care of their needs as best you can.
- **Show kindness to people** who may not have a support system or are isolated. There may be limits to what you can do in reaching out, but a little kindness may be just what someone needs.

Additional Resources

- **Center for Disease Control:** cdc.gov/coronavirus
- **American Red Cross:** redcross.org/coronavirus
 - Free online course [Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19](#)
- **National [Disaster Distress Helpline](#):** Available to anyone experiencing emotional distress related to COVID-19. Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to speak to a caring counselor. TTY 1-800-846-8517. Spanish Speakers. Call 1-800-985-5990 and press "2" From the 50 States, text Hablanos to 66746. From Puerto Rico, text Hablanos to 1-787-339-2663
- **If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety,** or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).
- **Find your local food bank** at feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank. Different food banks have different procedures. Call first to check your food bank's requirements.
- **Call 211 for community resources and referrals.** Or visit the national [211 Call Center Search website](#) to find the 211 information and referral center nearest you. Visit auntbertha.com for other local resources.