Feeling stressed about the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

As coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads, many people are anxious about the uncertainty of what is happening. You may be wondering if the virus will come to your community and how you can protect yourself and your family.

It is normal to feel anxious and/or overwhelmed by COVID-19. Some people may be more vulnerable if they already have a health or generalized anxiety disorder. In either case, feeling stressed can affect your immune system and increase the risk of getting ill in general. That is why it is important to take steps to manage your anxiety and how you react to the situation.

Here are a few things you can do to help yourself:

1. **Seek health information from trusted resources.**
   Trusted sources for information regarding coronavirus include the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), The World Health Organization (WHO), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and your state departments of health.

2. **Plan ahead to feel more in control.**
   Go food shopping and make contingency plans for work, childcare or travel if they become necessary.

3. **Take good care of yourself.**
   Wash your hands often, get plenty of rest and eat well. People infected by novel coronavirus tend to develop symptoms about five days after exposure, and almost always within two weeks.

4. **Stay informed, but don't overdo it.**
   The industry sometimes uses panic-inducing headlines. If you do consume media, limit the amount of time and the number of media sources you consume. Do so thoughtfully and with a critical eye. News that is meaningful and actionable takes several days or weeks to mature, so checking every hour or day may not really be helpful.

If you find that you are having difficulty managing stress, or if a household member is hypervigilant, obsessively reading about the crisis and worrying about the effects, remember you can speak with a clinical professional through your EAP. These services are free and confidential.

General Facts

Protect Yourself:
- Try to sleep because sleep improves the ability to fight viruses.

Avoid Spreading
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze into your upper arm.
- Stay home if you are sick, especially if you have a fever.