COVID-19 & Coronavirus

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Coping with Social Distancing

The constant media coverage of the outbreak of COVID-19 may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about an infectious disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Successfully coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. Healthy alternatives to help cope with this stress while still practicing social distancing include the following:

- Maintain a routine. Try to maintain a regular meal and sleep schedule while practicing social distancing. The regular schedule can help to reduce stress and fear of the unknown.
- Go for a walk or exercise at home. Try to go out into nature as much as possible for the benefits of Vitamin D (sunlight). If you cannot get out of the house, most streaming services offer exercise and yoga classes.
- Do not indulge in binging. Binging in eating, alcohol or drug use and even television and oversleeping are all unhealthy habits.
- We can all use this time to do some spring cleaning and decluttering. On top of increasing anxiety, household clutter can harbor infections, pollutants, and create unhygienic spaces.
- Be a better friend/relative. Take the time to run through your contacts and reach out to those people that you haven't spoken to in a while. Offer to help out a friend or neighbor who may be less mobile. Pick up groceries or needed prescriptions.
- Learn something new. Take an online class, research a topic that interests you, or watch "how-to" or
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March 16, 2020

Mental Health: Managing Anxiety and Stress

The outbreak of COVID-19 may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations.

Stress reactions during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

There are many things you can do to support your child during this time, as they may be influenced by inaccurate or false information.

- Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and **share facts** about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- Reassure your child or teen that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
- Limit your family's exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- Try to keep up with regular routines and with schools closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.
- Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Also, consider connecting with your friends and family members virtually.

Where to get information

Please visit that website or those belonging to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO) for the most current and reputable information available as well as the St. Louis County Health Dept.

Reporting

Residents experiencing symptoms of fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, should contact the St. Louis County Health Line at **(314) 615-2660** with their concerns. Those who have reason to believe they have encountered a person infected with COVID-19 should also utilize that number.
The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services hotline can be reached at **(877) 435-8411**.

St. Louis County email address for unique needs of COVID-19 media inquiries is **stlcorona@stlouisco.com**. This is to be used for all COVID-19 requests that would otherwise be sent to the St. Louis County Department of Public Health, the St. Louis County Police Office of Emergency Management, or any of the personnel of those Departments.
St. Louis County has created a website dedicated to the dissemination of information relating to COVID-19, **www.stlcorona.com**. Please visit that website or those belonging to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO) for the most current and reputable information available.