

Tips for Managing Concerns and Emotions about Coronavirus

News reports about the coronavirus, together with concerns that the virus could become more widespread, is raising a number of concerns and making some people anxious. Here are some tips to help you put information and concerns in perspective, manage your anxiety, and maintain a positive outlook.

Tips

- **Seek accurate information** (e.g. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> or <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>) and limit exposure to social media and news reports that provide no new information or inaccurate information.
- **Keep things in perspective.** Take a deep breath and remind yourself that the number of confirmed infections in the U.S. is extremely low. The fact that there is a great deal of news coverage on this issue does not necessarily mean that it presents a threat to you or your family. Pay attention to positive news instead of only focusing on negative and fear-producing reports.
- **Acknowledge reactions.** Allow yourself time to reflect on what you are feeling and how you may be reacting to any fears and uncertainties.
- **Maintain your normal day-to-day activities and keep connected.** Resist withdrawing and isolating yourself. Maintaining social networks can foster a sense of normality and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress. Feel free to share useful information you find on governmental websites with your friends and family. It will help them deal with their own anxiety.
- **Follow the prevention and protection tips given by medical professionals** such as UM Student Health Services, national medical authorities and your own medical doctor.
- **Practice calming rituals:** Stay grounded in the present moment, which can help you maintain an internal sense of stability and balance when outside events feel threatening.
- **Seek supports & use campus resources.** Reach out to friends and family and learn about campus resources available. If you or someone you know has high distress that does not seem to be lessening, talk about it with others or contact the Counseling Center or the Dean of Students Office. Your campus community is here to help!

Avoid Stigmatizing or Generalizing

- **Be aware of your behavior or attitude change towards others from another country and avoid stigmatizing.**
- **Avoid generalizing anyone who is sick as potentially having the Coronavirus**
- **Examine any irrational or rigid thoughts that can exist when there is uncertainty**

Recognizing Distress - A Self-Check List

- Increased anxiety, worry, fear, and feelings of being overwhelmed
- Depressive symptoms that persist and/or intensify
- Inability to focus or concentrate accompanied by decreased academic or work performance or performance of other daily activities
- Sleep difficulties
- Excessive Crying
- Isolating or withdrawing from others, fear of going into public situations
- Unhealthy coping (e.g., increased alcohol or drug use, engaging in risky/impulsive behaviors)
- A feeling of hopelessness and/or a paralyzing fear about the future
- Sudden anger and disruptive behaviors or noticeable changes in personality

UM Student Resources

Resources for Students

Counseling Center

(305) 284-5511

<https://counseling.studentaffairs.miami.edu>

Dean of Students Office

(305) 284-5353

<https://doso.studentaffairs.miami.edu>

Student Health Services

305-284-9100

<https://studenthealth.studentaffairs.miami.edu/>

International Student & Scholar Services

305-284-2928

<https://iss.miami.edu/>

Adapted from: University of Indianapolis – “Psychological Tips for Managing Coronavirus Concerns”

(<https://www.uindy.edu/studentcounseling/scc-news-updates>) & American Psychological Association- “Five Ways to View Coverage of the Coronavirus” (<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/bird-flu>)