We know that the uncertainly surrounding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) can lead to increased anxiety, worry & stress but know we are here to help you get through this. We are committed to providing you assistance with coping with this situation, remember the importance of self-care & its benefits. Practicing good health hygiene, Getting adequate sleep, Eating balanced diet and Engaging in exercise can help reinforce the autonomy you have during this time. Continue to use your coping skills and Mindfulness techniques you have previously learned as well.

It is important to know there is a difference between: Anxiety, Worry, Fear and Panic. Panic is an irrational fear reaction that, by definition, your body's reaction and adrenaline response take over from your ability to actually rationally evaluate the situation. Our goal is to be able to provide you with some steps & information which could help you manage your anxiety symptoms associated with this situation.

**For additional coping skills check out:**

<https://www.verywellmind.com/mindfulness-exercises-2797624>

<https://www.pocketmindfulness.com/6-mindfulness-exercises-you-can-try-today/>

<https://tinybuddha.com/blog/45-simple-self-care-practices-for-a-healthy-mind-body-and-soul/>

**Resources & Supports:**

**The Centers for Disease Control (CDC):** has guidance on [managing mental health](https://thejedfoundation.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jhikuujk-uidigjklr-y/) and coping during COVID-19 for children and caregivers. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

[**Massachusetts Department of Public Health**](https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19) – Please see Facts Sheet & FAQ sections for more information. <https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

**The**[**World Health Organization**](https://thejedfoundation.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jhikuujk-uidigjklr-h/)**(WHO)** has information on travel, media resources, and other research on COVID-19. (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>)

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**: call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Text “START” to 741-741 to reach the Crisis Text Line.

**Behavioral health Network:** Crisis Support Line 24 hour availability- 413-733-6661

**Coping with the Uncertainty surrounding the Coronavirus:**

1. ***Separate what is in your Control from what is not****:* There are certain things you have the ability to control, Examples: Good Hygiene, Reducing Travel and improving overall mindset.
* [Wash your hands often](https://www.cnet.com/news/how-to-wash-your-hands-to-protect-yourself-from-coronavirus/) (and [sanitize them](https://www.cnet.com/news/hand-sanitizer-how-it-can-protect-you-from-getting-sick-and-when-to-use-it/) when you don't have [soap](https://www.cnet.com/news/the-best-germ-killing-hand-soaps-from-cheap-to-luxury/) and water)
* Stay away from people who are sick or presenting with symptoms.
* Cover your mouth when you cough and your nose when you sneeze (ideally with a tissue that you can throw away)
* Avoid touching your face whenever possible.
* [Leave the face masks](https://www.cnet.com/news/which-face-masks-protect-against-coronavirus/) for medical professionals, caretakers and people with compromised immune systems
* Avoid nonessential travel (locally, domestically and internationally)
* Keep your immune system strong by eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep and managing stress.
1. ***Do what helps YOU feel a sense of safety*:** This will be different for everyone, and it’s important not to compare yourself to others.
* It’s ok if you’ve decided what makes you feel safe is to limit attendance of large social events.
* Make sure you are separating/isolating based on the potential for sickness versus isolating because it’s part of your depression/anxiety.
1. ***Get outside in nature–even if you are avoiding crowds:***
* Getting some Sun & Fresh Air can help your overall mood & get your dose of vitamin D.
* Exercise & be Active will help keep your mind occupied and address your Physical and Mental Health.
1. ***Challenge yourself to stay in the present:***
* You are not only thinking about what is currently happening, but also projecting into the future. When you find yourself worrying about something that hasn’t happened, gently bring yourself back to the present moment.
* Engaging in mindfulness activities is one way to help stay grounded when things feel beyond your control.
1. ***Stay connected and reach out if you need more support.***
* Limit your consumption of News (over viewing could increase anxiety/panic).
* Verbalize your anxiety/concerns, it’s ok to reach out to a mental health professional for support.
* You don’t have to be alone with your worry and it can be comforting to share what you are experiencing with those trained to help.

**::7 Steps to Protect Yourself::**

**Clean your hands often:**

* Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
* If soap & water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

**Avoid close contact:**

* Avoid close contact with people who are sick
* Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. (Reduce being around large groups/communions of others)
* This is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html).

**Stay home if you’re sick:**

* Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
* Avoid unneeded trips out if showing symptoms to reduce exposure to others.

**Cover coughs and sneezes:**

* Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow & dispose of used tissues in the trash.
* Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

**Wear a facemask if you are sick:**

* If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people & [learn what to do if you are sick.](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html) Check out Massachusetts Department of Public Health page for more information.
* If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

**Clean and Disinfect:**

* Clean & disinfect [frequently touched surfaces](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html) daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
* If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

**FACTS of COVID-19 - Coronavirus**

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health:**

-February 27th, 2020

A new infectious disease known as COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus) was first detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This viral infection has resulted in thousands of confirmed human infections, with the vast majority of cases in China. Other countries, including the United States, have identified a growing number of cases in people who have traveled to China. More recently, transmission has been noted in some countries that has not been directly linked to cases in China, indicating community-level transmission in some places.

**How does coronavirus spread:** Coronaviruses are respiratory viruses and are generally spread through respiratory secretions (such as droplets from coughs and sneezes) of an infected person to another person.

**What are the symptoms of COVID-19:** This coronavirus causes a Respiratory Infection. Symptoms of this infection include: • Fever • Coughing • Shortness of Breath • In severe cases, Pneumonia. While most people recover from this infection, some infections can lead to severe disease or death. Older people & those with pre-existing medical problems seem to have a greater risk for severe disease.

**What are the treatment & is there a vaccine:** There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19, other than supportive care & relief of symptoms. Currently, there is no vaccine available to protect people from infection with the virus that causes COVID-19.

**How can I protect myself:** The same precautions to help prevent colds and the flu can help protect against other Respiratory Viruses: • Wash your hands often with soap & warm water for at least 20 seconds. • Cover your coughs and sneezes. • Stay home if you are sick.

**Should I wear a mask when I go out in public:** Masks can be useful to prevent someone who has a respiratory illness from spreading it to others but there is no hard evidence that wearing a mask protects the wearer outside of the healthcare setting.

**How do you test a person for COVID-19:** Testing for the Coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is only available through the Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory & the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Any healthcare provider who suspects a person is infected with 2019 Novel Coronavirus should call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to discuss testing, at (617) 983-6800.

If you have had close contact with someone who has the virus, • Monitor your health for 14 days after your last possible exposure. • Watch for Signs/Symptoms: 1. Fever 2. Coughing 3. Shortness of breath or Difficulty Breathing • Other Symptoms: Chills, Body aches, Sore throat, Headache, Diarrhea, Nausea/Vomiting & Runny nose.

**\*\*If you develop any of these symptoms, call your healthcare provider. • Before going to your medical appointment, be sure to tell your healthcare provider about your possible exposure to COVID-19. For questions Contact your doctor, clinic, or local board of health (in the phonebook under Local Government). Contact the DPH Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences at (617) 983-6800.** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>.