

Information

In many countries, the number of infections with COVID-19 has been increasing (again). The crisis continues persistently. Likewise, feelings of uncertainty and fear or feelings of powerlessness and helplessness have been rampant. Psychological burdens can turn into depression, anxiety disorder, and somatoform discomfort. An infection with COVID-19 is not a precondition for that. Rather, psychological symptoms can be the result of other factors: Restrictions coinciding with protective measures, social distancing, wearing masks, travel restrictions, and also the fear of being infected or losing your one's job. This particularly applies to people with predispositions.

Stress during the COVID-19-crises can become manifest in the following ways:

- Worrying about one's own health and the health of relatives or friends
- Changes in sleep rhythm or appetite
- Difficulties in falling asleep or in focusing
- Feeling apathetic and weak
- Exacerbation of chronic health problems
- Increasing consumption of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs
- Intensification of symptoms or development of new symptoms which must be dealt with in addition to prior psychological disorders
- negative thoughts or emotions

People react to stress in different and their individual ways

It is absolutely normal when you experience intense feelings which frequently change at the moment. These feelings include fear, anger or negative thoughts. They, in turn, cause other negative feelings and exacerbate sleep problems, fatigue, apathy and fear.

What can I do?

- Try to get some distraction, once you observe such thoughts in your mind!
- Look for activities which make you experience joy and fun! Get or stay physically active!
- Talk to a person whom, you feel, you can trust about your worries and fears!
- Stay in touch with friends and your family! Seeing them regularly can help you in this situation.
- Structure your everyday life. Stick to your usual sleep rhythm, have regular meals!
- Motivate yourself to stick to your everyday life structure!

How to approach children?

When you have kids, be active by talking to them about the crisis. In this way, you take away the fear from them. As a result, they will be under the impression that they can talk about their fears.

Collect information!

Pay attention to the amount of information! Do not read too many articles with a negative head line or negative contents!

Collect the latest information about COVID-19 from reputable information sources:

- Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA, <https://www.infektionsschutz.de/coronavirus.html>),}
- Robert-Koch-Institute (RKI, https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/nCoV.html) and
- Federal Ministry of Health (<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/coronavirus.html>).

Look for and accept professional support at an early state, once you experience extensive feelings of stress! Contact local psychosocial counselling services, your family doctor, psychiatrists, psychologists or the local health authorities! Find more information on how to deal with situations which are socially or psychologically burdensome by following this link: <http://plattform-fuer-psychoziale-fachkraefte.psychisch-sozial-gesund.de/>.

