



Just a quick note to let you know that the Care for Yourself team is thinking of you in this time of uncertainty. Enclosed you will find a few helpful tips on coping with stress and an informational magnet with ways to reduce breast cancer risk. If you have any questions call Nancy at Butler County Public Health at 319-267-2934.

Thank you,

Nancy Hemann

Butler County Public Health

Stress and Coping

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID19 may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief and worry during a disaster. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time.

Stress 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
- Physical reactions such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems and skin rashes
- Anger or short temper
- Crying frequently
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID19
- Children and teens
- People who are helping with the response to COVID19, like doctors, nurses, other healthcare providers and first responders
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use.

Ways to cope with stress:

- Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body.
 - Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate
 - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals
 - Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep
 - Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Make time to unwind - try to do some other activities you enjoy
- Connect with others - talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling