



# Hackensack Meridian *Health* Carrier Clinic

## How to Manage Anxiety Around Coronavirus

Feeling anxious about the recent spread of coronavirus (known as COVID-19) is completely normal, especially since the media has been covering the outbreak around the clock. We are still learning how the virus will impact us, but the most important thing to keep in mind is: don't panic.

Mental health experts from Hackensack Meridian *Health* share key tips to manage anxiety related to COVID-19.

### 1. Limit exposure to media, focus on the facts

When you're feeling concerned about something that's being covered in the news, it's natural human behavior to keep checking the TV, radio and social media to see the latest reports. Instead of checking in to mainstream media that may sensationalize some of the more extreme claims or cases related to COVID-19, stick with reliable sources, like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for the facts.

Better yet, take a break from the news and social media and focus on the things that help keep us happy and healthy, like quality time with family or a walk outside.

### 2. Reduce your risk of getting sick and spreading germs

One thing we can all do to reduce fear and anxiety related to COVID-19 is to do our part in reducing the spread of infection. Making smart decisions and practicing good hygiene really do help. Here are some tips:

**Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.

**Stay home** when you are sick.

**Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper arm.

**Clean your hands.** Frequent washing helps protect you and others from germs. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

**Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread this way.

### 3. Make self-care a priority

Whole body wellness provides a strong foundation for managing stress. During mental distress, a healthy body helps minimize symptoms of anxiety and depression, while a healthy mind supports effective problem-solving and a positive outlook. These practices, in concert with common sense precautions designed to ward off coronavirus, will keep us all a lot safer and happier.

Meditate.

Practice slow, mindful breathing.

Turn to friends and family for help and support.

Spend time in nature.

Get a healthy amount of sleep.

Exercise to release mood-enhancing endorphins.

Listen to music.

Avoid substances known to increase anxiety such as tobacco, alcohol and cannabis.

