

## **Coronavirus: Being Prepared**

During times of crisis, including the recent public health concerns about COVID-19 (coronavirus), it is natural to be anxious to rise. The onslaught of news, information and even misinformation can make us feel unsafe and unsure about how to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

One of the best ways to manage a crisis and the feelings that it creates is to have a plan. They provide us with structure and help us feel more in control, which reduces anxieties and fears.

We encourage you to consider the following tips as you develop a plan:

### **1. Prepare to Work from Home:**

- The best way to manage a contagious illness is to reduce exposure to others. If you are sick, stay home to avoid infecting others.
- Ask your employer if remote work is possible for your job. If so, equip yourself with the necessary tools to perform your duties from home. For example, bring home your laptop nightly and be sure to have a compatible power cord. · There is information here on factors related to travel: <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/coronavirus-grounds-business-travel.aspx>

### **2. Practice Good Hygiene**

- Health experts agree that the best way to reduce the spread of illness is to wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds at a time. They also recommend not touching your eyes, mouth and nose with your bare hands. This requires conscious practice for most of us.
- Cover your mouth with your bent elbow when you cough and sneeze. Keep a distance from others to prevent the spread of the virus. Avoid contact with vulnerable populations, such as the elderly or those with pre-existing medical conditions.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends keeping 3 feet from someone who may be sick.

### **3. Practice Self Care**

Stress and lack of sleep can make us more vulnerable to viruses such as the flu and COVID-19. Healthy eating, exercise and regular sleep can build emotional and physical resilience.

### **4. Prepare Your Home**

Consider adding extra food on your shelves and medicine in your cabinet in case you get sick. While there is no need to stockpile, a few extra cans of soup and a bottle of fever-reducer such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen are good to have on hand. Think about other items, such as diapers, that you might require if you need to stay at home for a couple of weeks.

### **5. Consider Back-Up Care**

If you have children or older adult loved ones who need caregiving, contemplate who could care for them if their usual providers become ill. Find out if your employer has a back-up care program and, if so, enroll before you need it. Alternatively, contact your employee assistance program to discuss possible care options.

Perspectives Counseling Centers is here to help you and your family members manage the anxiety from health concerns such as coronavirus. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please call 866.296.5262.