

Stay connected...

The fear associated with emergencies can push people apart.

For example, people who are normally close to family and friends may be afraid to talk about their feelings of depression or guilt, or they may blame others.

During a declared emergency, state, county, and/or local officials will tell you how to protect yourself and your loved ones. Until then, stay connected with family and friends by phone and through e-mail.

If you notice a big change in mood or other behavior in a loved one, friend, or co-worker, reach out to him or her. Make some time to talk. Watching out for others shows you care. It can be comforting to both of you.

When to seek additional help...

If you are anxious about a health risk, talk to someone who can help. This may be your doctor, a family member, friend, clergy member, teacher, or mental health professional.

If you or someone you know is having difficulty managing his or her emotions, seek help from a medical or mental health professional.

If you or someone you know talks about or is considering suicide, contact the 24-hour suicide crisis hotline at 1-800-273-TALK.

Here are some ways you can cope with stress and anxiety...

- Limit your exposure to graphic news stories.
- Get accurate, timely information from reliable sources.
- Educate yourself about specific health hazards.
- Maintain your normal daily routine, if you can.
- Exercise, eat well, and rest.
- Stay active—physically and mentally.
- Keep in touch with family and friends.
- Find comfort in your spiritual and personal beliefs.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Find healthy ways to express your feelings.

Coping With Your Emotions During Emergencies



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Handling emergencies...

The information in this brochure can help you identify and cope with anxiety related to emergencies.

It's natural to be upset when you think your health or well-being—or the health or well-being of your loved ones—may be threatened.

Experiencing emergencies, such as tornados, fires, pandemic disease, hurricanes, floods, etc., can have a powerful effect on people of all ages.

Pay attention to these feelings and take care of your own emotional needs. When you do, you can help friends and family members handle their concerns better.

When we don't know for sure...

Anxiety is related to fear of the unknown. It is normal to feel anxious and worried about a spreading disease or a disaster warning, especially if there is no known cure or cause.

Coping with your feelings during times of uncertainty can be challenging, but remember, you are not alone.



All people react in their own way...

During emergencies, normal reactions include:

Physical

- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Fast pulse
- High blood pressure
- Changes in appetite
- Unexplained aches or pains
- Trouble sleeping
- Sleeping too much
- Stomach aches

Emotional

- Panic, anxiety
- Distrust, fear
- Anger, irritability
- Sadness, depression
- Blame
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Increased stress

Mental

- Trouble concentrating
- Problems with work or school
- Memory problems
- Troubling thoughts that won't go away
- Concerns about health issues

Behavioral

- Avoiding others
- Increased substance abuse
- Excessive cleaning or washing
- Being overly cautious, jumpiness

Get reliable information...

When we face uncertainty about emergencies, it is important to keep things in perspective.

Get information during emergencies from:

- Your healthcare and/or behavioral health provider
- Indiana Department of Homeland Security
www.in.gov/dhs
- Indiana State Department of Health
www.isdh.in.gov
- U.S. Government Pandemic Flu Information
www.pandemicflu.gov
- U.S. Government Pandemic Flu Information—Spanish
<http://espanol.pandemicflu.gov>
- U.S. Government Avian Flu Information
www.avianflu.gov
www.fighttheflu.org/ind
- Allen County Department of Health
www.fw-ac-deptohealth.com/ex.htm
- CDC (Centers for Disease Control)
www.cdc.gov
- Indiana Family and Social Services Administration
www.in.gov/fssa