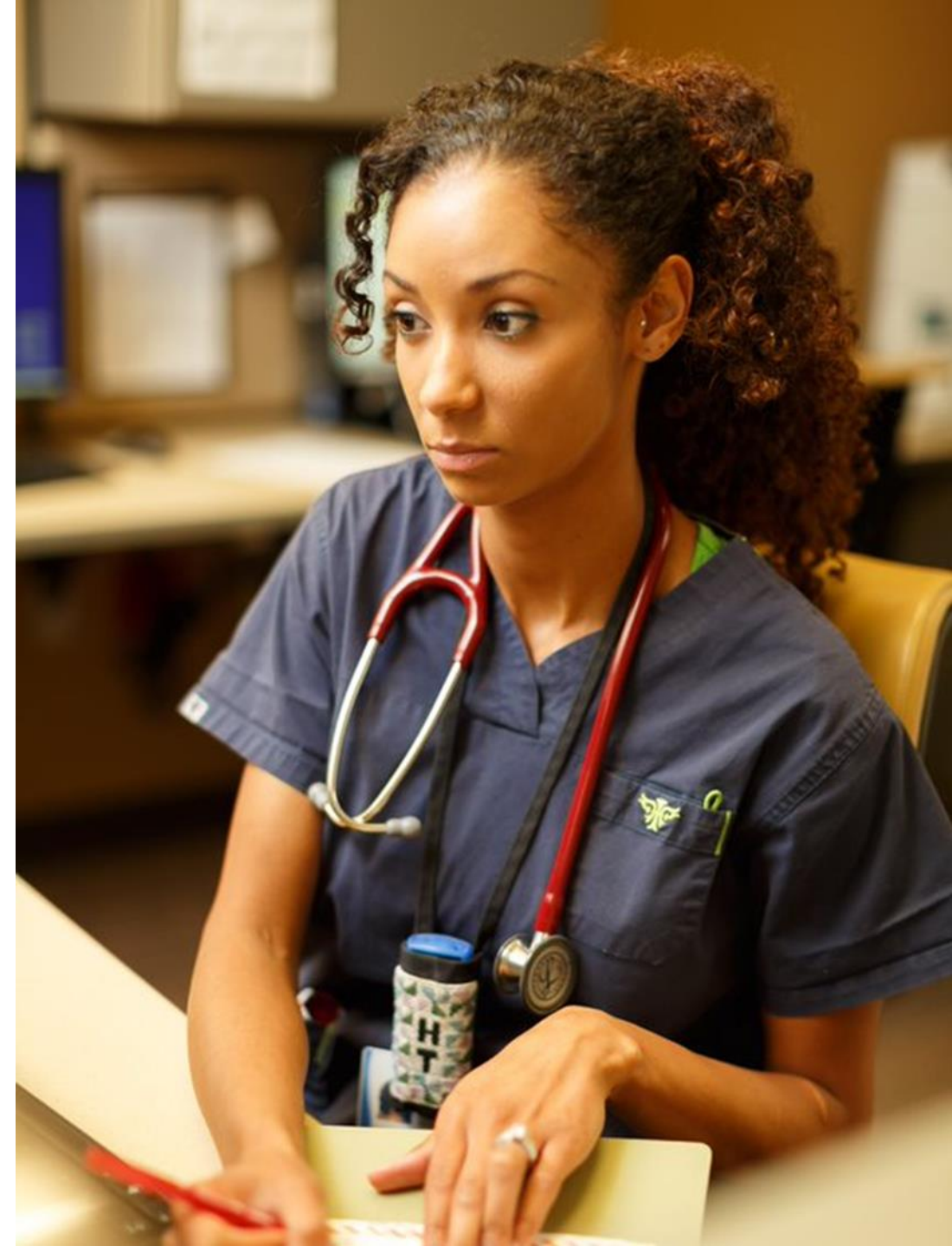


Managing Stress in Stressful Times:

Responding to COVID-19

*Intermountain Employee Assistance
Program*



EAP

Call us at 801-442-3509 or 1-800-832-7733

Email us at eap@imail.org

Visit our website: www.intermountainhealthcare.org/eap

Anyone who is having thoughts of self harm or suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273- TALK (8255) for crisis support, and community resources and referrals.

Tips to **manage the stress and anxiety** you may
be feeling.

You're likely having a **normal reaction**
to an **abnormal situation**.

Support in Times of Crisis



Objectives

This presentation will address the following issues:

- Signs of stress/anxiety in the face of emergencies
- When to ask for help
- Where to obtain valid information
- Coping strategies

Signs of Stress/Anxiety

Your mood and behavior may be affected, whether you recognize it or not. Signs include:

Common symptoms of other health issues mistaken for COVID symptoms

Trouble relaxing or sleeping

Difficulty concentrating, lack of focus

Obsessive seeking of information about emergency

Restlessness or jumpiness

Irritability, shorter temper than usual, other mood changes

Persistent feelings of nervousness, worry, or sadness

Signs of Stress/Anxiety

Continued

...

Headaches

Appetite changes

Anxiety-related stomach issues, stomach ache, diarrhea

Lack of energy, exhausted

Loss of enjoyment in activities

Feeling guilty (i.e., not able to help, not being sick when others are, not wanting to ask for help)

Unhealthy coping strategies (i.e., increased substance use, withdrawing, etc)

Facing Emergencies



Often times the perception of the emergency can be greater than the emergency itself.



Easily overwhelmed by uncertainty.



It is normal for your imagination to run rampant, and *may* spring from realistic fears/dangers.

Facing Emergencies



Many reactions are born from lack of knowledge, misinformation, or rumors.



Distress may increase, even if you are at little or no risk of getting sick.



In an emergency, regular coping may be taxed.

Know When to Ask for Help

If you or someone you know shows signs of stress for an extended period of time → *reach out for help to EAP, friends, family, clergy*



Employee Assistance Program

If you or someone you know is experiencing signs of COVID 19 → *contact your medical provider*

- *Fever*
- *Cough*
- *Shortness or breath*

Common COVID Concerns

Fear of...

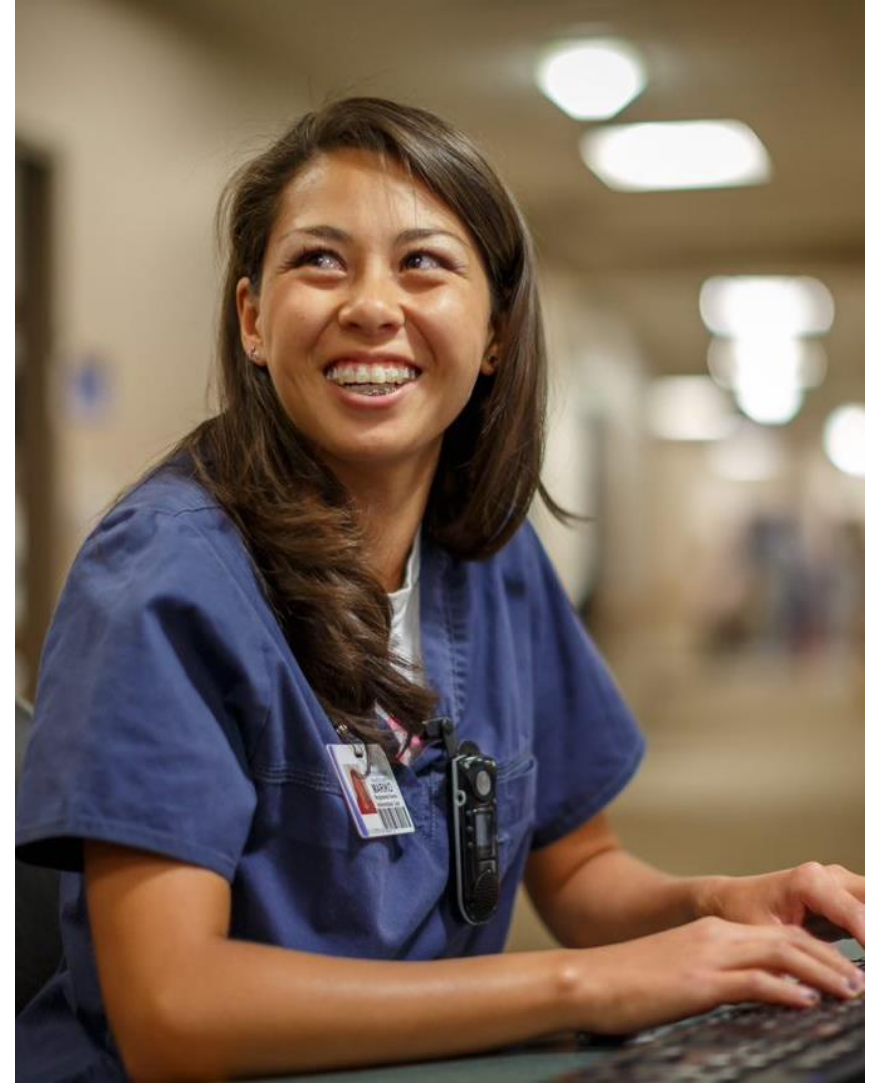
- Being exposed/infected
- The unknown
- Exposing others/family
- Caring for family
- Financial hardship – furloughed, unable to work, etc.



Community Health is Paramount

Intermountain wants your healthiest self for:

- You & your family
- Your community
- Your job



How to Talk to Kids About COVID

Highlights

- Manage your own anxiety
- Be a source of truth, “What have you heard?”
- Reflect your child’s emotion back to them
- Understand child’s developmental level
- Be honest, but don’t share everything
- Be reassuring
- Help kids do things within their control, washing hands, etc.
- Seek professional help if needed



Coping Strategies



Be informed



Be smart



Be prepared and healthy



Be connected



Be positive



Be resilient



Be your best self



Be comfortable with uncertainty

Be Informed

Obtain information from valid sources, such as:



Be Informed

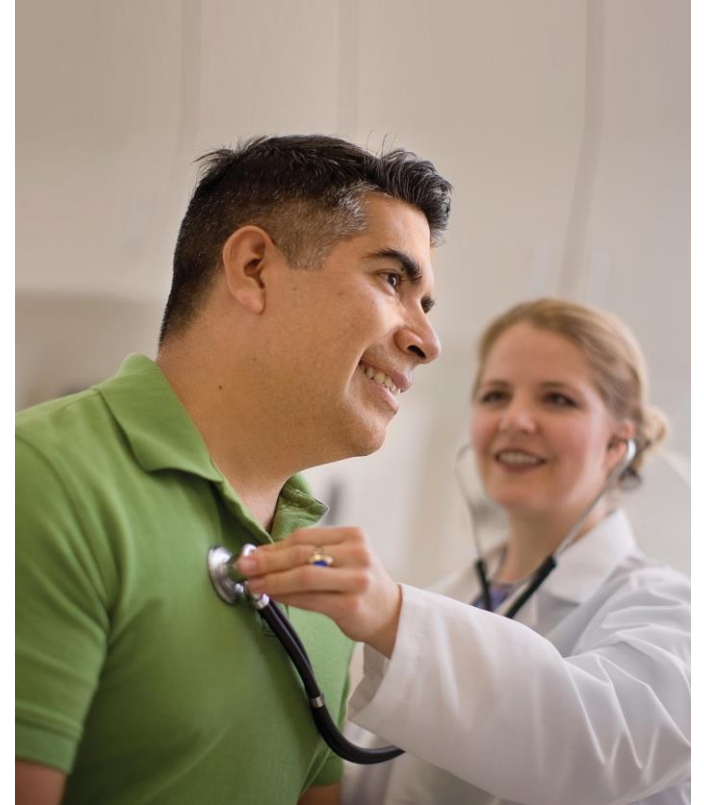
- Limit reading/watching news to 30 min.
- Engage in calming activities
 - Deep breathing
 - Stretching
 - Hobbies
 - Music
 - Reading
 - Healthy distractions
 - Self talk, “We’re going to get through this.”
 - Other relaxing activities



Be Smart

Follow evidence based hygiene habits

- Wash hands frequently
- Use hand sanitizer
- Cough into tissue/sleeve
- Avoid touching eyes, face
- Avoid unnecessary social contact
- CDC recommends maintaining a 6-foot distance



Be Prepared



Have a plan to address anxieties/concerns

Some worry about whether they will be exposed

Some worry about having food/supplies

Some worry about finances, job, etc.



Know what your concerns are



Take steps to address your concerns



Remember, anxiety can be a positive prompt to help you be prepared.

Be Healthy

Know how to self soothe in times of stress

- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Music
- Reading
- Singing
- Meditation/Mindfulness*

*see link to mindfulness page in references



Be Connected

Family and friends

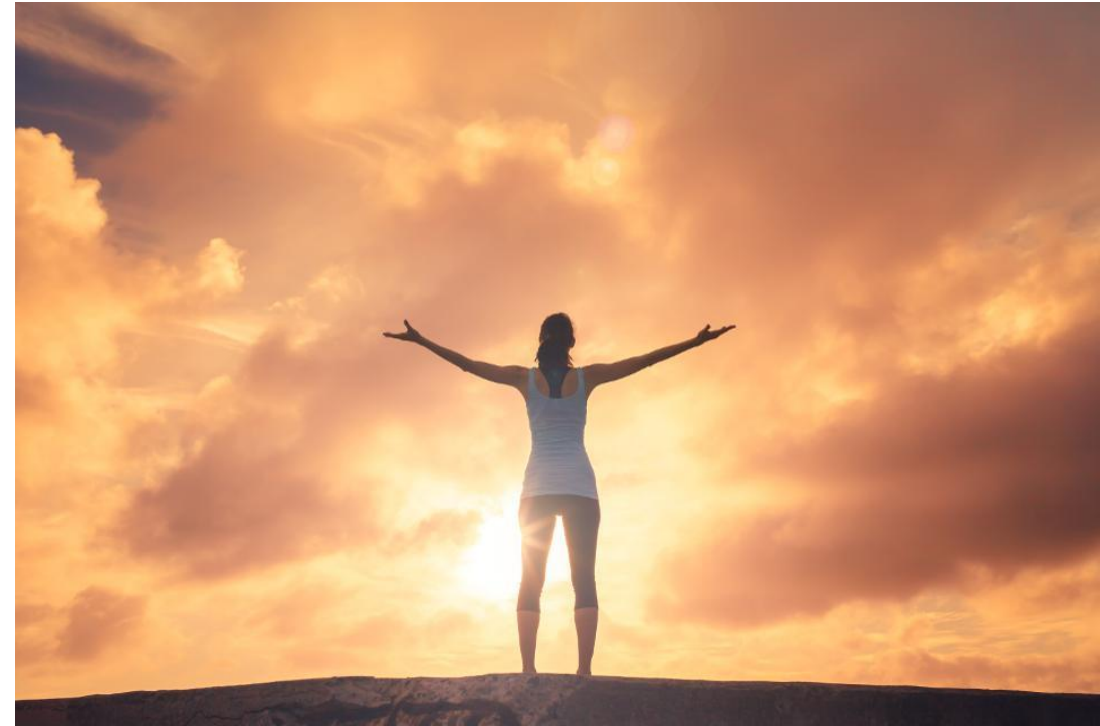
- Check in with family and friends
- Pick up your phone right now, and text a short message to someone you care about
- Research shows that people who maintain strong social connections actually get sick less



Be Connected

Faith

- Reconnect with your spiritual roots, or find new ones.
- Where do you go for peace and solitude?
- How do you connect to the greater good?
- Be mindful and intentional



Be Positive



Focus on what is in your control



Identify the good things in your life – focus your energy on these things



Look for what went well today



Practice gratitude

Be Resilient

Remember

Remember previous struggles and how you made it through

Tell

Tell yourself a good story

Connect

Connect with your strengths and values

Be

Be open to how you may grow because of this

Be your best self

Crises often brings out the best in humanity

Notice when you help others

Notice when they help you

See the heroes who walk amongst us, starting with you

Be Comfortable with Uncertainty

- Steady yourself
- Practice being courageous in the face of the unknown
- Remind yourself that you can do hard things
- Break difficult tasks into smaller parts; complete one task then move on
 - Research shows that tiny actions can conquer anxiety
 - SPACE: Small Positive Actions have Cumulative Effect
 - Just knowing what to do is not as important as actually doing it

A watercolor illustration of a heart. The top half of the heart is a vibrant red, while the bottom half is a lighter, pinkish-red. A bright yellow banner with a slightly wavy, torn-edge appearance is draped across the middle of the heart. The banner has small, light green and yellowish tabs or folds at its ends. The text "Be Kind to Yourself" is written in a bold, dark red, sans-serif font across the center of the yellow banner.

Be Kind to Yourself

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References/Resources

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/crazy-life/201805/part-1-research-shows-tiny-actions-can-help-conquer-anxiety>

[One Small Step Can Change Your Life: The Kaizen Way](#) Paperback by Robert Maurer (2014) (page 5)

www.intermountainmindfulness.org

<https://intermountainhealthcare.org/blogs/topics/live-well/2020/03/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus/>