

# COVID-19

## Stress, Anxiety and Depression Associated with the Coronavirus Diseases

### A variety of reactions are possible in the context of a Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

The current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is a particular and rare situation. It can affect people physically, but also psychologically. In this type of context, many people will experience stress, anxiety and depression reactions. This page should be seen as a tool that can help you to minimize the repercussions of these kinds of reactions on your life.

### What does stress mean?

Stress is a normal physiological response to an abnormal situation. As such, it is part and parcel of our lives. It enables our body to adapt to the multiplicity of positive and negative events that we experience, like a birth, marriage, loss of employment, etc. Stress comes and goes on its own, depending of what factors are involved. For example, if you feel stressed on the job but less so at home in the evening or on the weekend, we could deduce that the stressors are work-related.

### What does anxiety mean?

Contrary to fear, which is a response to a well-defined and very real threat, anxiety is a response to a vague or unknown threat. Anxiety manifests itself when we believe that a dangerous or unfortunate event may take place and are expecting it. Everyone experiences anxiety at their own individual degree and intensity. How the anticipated event is perceived will greatly influence the intensity of the anxiety experience.

### What does depression mean?

The dictionary defines depression as a passing state of lassitude, discouragement and sadness. Depression can appear in a variety of physical and psychological ways.

Its intensity varies from one person to the next.

### Potential symptoms linked to stress, anxiety and depression

Stress, anxiety and depression reactions can appear in a variety of physical, psychological, emotional and behavioural ways for any given individual.

#### Physical symptoms:

- Headaches, neck tension, gastrointestinal problems, etc.
- Sleep problems
- Lower appetite
- Lower energy, fatigue
- Etc.

#### Psychological and emotional symptoms:

- Virus-related worries and insecurity
- Feelings of being overwhelmed by events, powerlessness
- Self-verbalization that does not always reflect reality
- Negative vision of things or daily events
- Feelings of discouragement, insecurity, sadness, anger
- Etc.

#### Behavioural symptoms:

- Difficulty in concentrating
- Irritability, aggression
- Crying
- Withdrawal, insularity
- Difficulty in taking decisions
- Increased use of alcohol, drugs and/or medication
- Etc.



