

How to Overcome Stress and Anxiety from COVID-19?

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The novel coronavirus continues to spread, infected cases continue to rise, and the long Covid is a major cause for concern. We are all exhausted and worn out from this type of overwhelming news, and we are very concerned about the future: will we still have a normal life? The COVID-19-induced psychological stress makes us feel as if we are walking on thin ice. How to overcome? So the strategic maneuvers are required to manage and overcome the potential dangers posed by daily stress.

Keywords: COVID-19; Pandemic; Psychological Stress; Long Covid; Therapeutics

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STRESS is a normal and necessary response, it functions as a defensive response, whether subjectively or objectively (1). It produces the experience of a dangerous situation, which explains why some people are afraid of empty spaces and others. We are living in perilous times, and we cannot deny their existence. Since the coronavirus is circulating, it is not surprising that everyone may be stressed (2, 3). This virus, presented suddenly as a situation no one knows about, was something new that adds to our lived experience, and it is normal for it to cause uncertainty, anxiety, or stress (4).

The body is prepared for short-term stressful situations, but it would cause the neuroendocrine system to be depleted (5). If these conditions persist, various diseases will manifest in the body, including high blood pressure, asthma, gastritis, as well as mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety. Each individual responds differently. Some would appear overwhelmed, distracted, irritable, sleepless, afflicted with nightmares, or overly concerned with the situation (6).

Different levels of stress and anxiety are classified based on exposure to COVID-19 (7-9). (i) The first-level population consists of confirmed COVID-19 patients (patients with severe

illness and above), frontline medical personnel for epidemic prevention and control, disease control personnel, and management personnel. Early psychological characteristics of such individuals include numbness, denial, anger, fear, anxiety, depression, disappointment, complaining, insomnia or aggression, and loneliness. They may also refuse to cooperate or abandon treatment out of fear of the disease or be overly optimistic about the efficacy of the treatment. And unrealistic expectations, or a sense of near-death, panic, or despair. (ii) The second-level population is home-isolated mild patients (close contacts, suspected patients) and hospital-visiting fever patients. The psychological characteristics of such individuals include panic, anxiety, loneliness, helplessness, depression, pessimism, anger, tension, as well as the pressure, grievance, shame, or lack of attention to the disease due to social isolation; some suspected patients may be suffering from avoidance of treatment, fear of discrimination or anxiety, excessive treatment seeking, frequent hospital transfers, etc. (iii) The third-level population includes those related to the first- and second-level populations, including family members, coworkers, and friends, as well as rescuers who participated in the epidemic response, such as on-site commanders, organiza-

tional managers, and volunteers. Avoidance, anxiety, anxiety during the waiting period, or blind bravery, refusal to protect and observe at home, etc., are the psychological traits of them. The fourth-level population refers to the affected relevant populations, susceptible populations, and the general public. The psychological traits of this level are panic, willingness to venture outside, blind disinfection, disappointment, fear, irritability, aggressive behavior, overconfidence, and abandonment.

The following methods can assist us in overcoming the anxiety and stress caused by COVID-19 (10-12). (i) Restore emotional equilibrium. It is necessary to acknowledge and accept your lack of control before engaging in breathing exercises or meditation. There are numerous tutorials and even apps available on the internet. (ii) Avoid isolation and connect with

others, whether at home, on the phone, or via social networks. People are typically motivated to communicate and share. We must choose the person who can convince us to calmly accept ourselves. (iii) Listen to music that is soothing. To release our emotions, we should engage in physical activity. If you already possess this knowledge, you can perform these activities at home on your own or by utilizing the Internet's countless options. (iv) Engage in some creative activity, find it useful, complete something you are halfway through, paint, engage in some hobbies, or enroll in a class. (v) Read or compose. Through these actions, we can restore emotional equilibrium, recognize the scope of the threat, and become aware of our capacity to defend ourselves and face the situation. ■

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