



# Anxiety and Panic During Covid-19 Pandemic

As the world is dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, Community Mental Health of Central Michigan recognizes that people will be dealing with anxiety surrounding the global situation. **Please recognize this anxiety is normal in crises such as these and some level of panic will occur for many of us. Please reach out to CMHCM if needed**

## Signs of elevated levels of anxiety

- Increased obsession
- Anger or irritability out of the norm
- Withdrawing from others with the exception of appropriate social distancing
- Unexplained sadness or worry

### Physical signs of panic:

- Increased heart rate for no reason
- Sweaty palms
- Constant movement for no explainable reason

## Techniques to calm down

- Take deep calming breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth counting to three each time you inhale and each time you exhale.
- Take a break from the news.
- Spend some time outside.
- Get physical exercise.
- Monitor the amount of news and social media they are engaging in.
- Take them outside for a walk or to play.
- Deep breathing for children
  - For older kids having them take deep calming breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth counting to three each time you inhale and each time you exhale.
  - For younger kids have them draw a pizza on a piece of paper including all their favorite toppings: Now have them smell the pizza and deeply inhale through their nose. Then instruct them to blow on the pizza because it's too hot to eat. Have them repeat this action multiple time. This shows them and encourages them to take deep calming breaths.

## Structure can help

Keep a consistent schedule for yourself and your children. This can help create a sense of normalcy. Stick to a daily routine. This can lead to lower stress levels, better sleep, and better overall health.

Examples of ideas to include in a daily schedule for yourself and your children include:

- a time to get up
- meal and snack times, and break times
- hygiene items such as showering, brushing teeth and hair etc.
- chores, work
- family time
- bed time.
- time for relaxation and exercise
- reading or work time, time outside, play time, craft time or electronic time.

