How to Cope with Stress During Pandemic Conditions

When you hear about an outbreak of an infectious disease such as COVID-19, you may feel anxious and show signs of stress. This is completely normal, but can interfere with normal, everyday functioning. During a pandemic requiring quarantine or social distancing, it is important to monitor your own physical and mental health and become aware of the signs of stress. Also, it is important to know how to relieve stress and when to reach out for help.

Signs of Stress:

Behavior:
- Increase or decrease in energy and activity levels
- Increase in use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Increase in irritability or anger
- Difficulty relaxing or sleeping
- Frequent crying
- Excessive worry
- Isolation
- Blaming others
- Inability to feel pleasure or have fun

Physical:
- Upset stomach
- Frequent headaches
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Tremors or muscle twitches
- Easily startled

Emotional:
- Increased anxiety or fear
- Feeling depressed or hopeless
- Anger/Resentment
- Feeling guilty
- Feeling euphoric or invincible
- Lack of concern or worry

Cognitive:
- Difficulty remembering things or thinking clearly
- Difficulty concentrating
- Trouble with decision-making

Relieving Stress:
- Set limits on how much time you spend reading or watching about the outbreak.
- Use accurate resources for information.
- Eat healthy foods and drink water.
- Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine or alcohol.
- Get physical exercise and stretch.
- Get adequate amount of sleep.
- Meditate/pray/deep breathing
- Engage in hobbies.
- Talk to loved ones about feelings.
- Take breaks frequently and relax.
- Pay attention to your own body.

LifeServices EAP provides free and confidential counseling, including coping with stress, anxiety, and mental wellness, amongst other life issues, and due to the mandates around COVID-19, telehealth services are available currently. If you or a family member need assistance please visit our webpage for additional information at www.lifeserviceseap.com or call 800-822-4847 to schedule an appointment.