

Strategies for coping with isolation and loneliness related to COVID-19

Whether you are self-isolating because you have COVID-19, have been exposed to someone who has it or staying home because you are in a high-risk category, you may find yourself unprepared for the feelings of isolation and loneliness that you experience.

Quarantining at home is an important step to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, but it doesn't mean that coping with the disruption in your normal routine is easy. Taking care of your mental health is essential during this time. It is normal to feel stress when faced with a lack of control of your situation, restricting your movements and separating yourself from your family and friends. Feeling isolated can lead to poor sleep, difficulty in managing your emotions and depressive symptoms.

Consider these steps to help lessen some of the negative mental health effects of quarantine:

- **Keep connected.** Keep in touch with your family and friends through your social networks. Pick up the phone, FaceTime, set up Zoom meetings, chat on Facebook and other digital platforms. The support of others can help you put things into perspective.
- **Stay active.** Depending on how you are feeling, do a low-impact home workout, practice yoga and/or go outside for a walk, making sure to maintain a 6-foot distance from others.
- **Consider speaking with a professional.** If you find yourself overwhelmed by the feelings you experience during quarantine, reach out to your employee assistance program, mental health provider, primary care provider or health plan for help.
- **Combat frustration and boredom.** Make time to plan and prepare nutritious meals, set up a series of uplifting movies and TV shows to watch, read a book, organize a closet or try out a new hobby.
- **Plan for the future.** While it might feel like this loneliness will last forever, there will come a time that you'll be back to your usual routines. One way to feel less alone now is to make plans or do things that help you to focus on the future.
- **Avoid using tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.** Now is the time to heal your body. Focus on what you can do to improve your health, not detract from it.

For more information and tips, visit www.magellanhealthcare.com/covid-19.

Sources:

www.verywellmind.com/how-to-cope-with-loneliness-during-coronavirus-4799661
www.verywellmind.com/protect-your-mental-health-during-quarantine-4799766