



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE & COUNSELING CENTER

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

205-934-2281*

uab.edu/eacc

Mental Health Tips for Managing Coronavirus Concerns

Updates for UAB from the UAB Emergency Operations Center

uab.edu/coronavirus

Recognizing Distress — A Self-Check List

- Increased anxiety, worry, fear, and feelings of being overwhelmed
- Depressive symptoms that persist and/or intensify
- Inability to focus or concentrate accompanied by decreased work performance
- A feeling of hopelessness and/or a paralyzing fear about the future
- Sudden anger and disruptive behaviors or noticeable changes in personality
- Sleep difficulties
- Excessive crying
- Isolating or withdrawing from others, fear of going into public situations
- Unhealthy coping (e.g., increased alcohol or drug use, engaging in risky/impulsive behaviors)

Mental Health Tips

- Acknowledge reactions. Allow yourself time to reflect on what you are feeling and how you may be reacting to any fears and uncertainties of the future.
- Maintain your day-to-day normal activities and social outlets. Resist withdrawing and isolating yourself from the support and caring that others can provide.
- Seek accurate information from The Center for Disease Control & Prevention and limit exposure to social media and news reports that provide no new information.
- Pay attention to positive news instead of only focusing on negative and fear-producing reports.
- Follow the protection and prevention tips given by medical professionals, national medical authorities and your own medical doctor. Information can be found at uab.edu/coronavirus.
- Practice calming rituals: Stay grounded in the present moment, which can help you maintain an internal sense of stability and balance when outside events feel threatening. Deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and mindfulness exercises can help. Check out our links at uab.edu/codeblaze and click on the “resources” button, then scroll to Stress Management for links and apps you can use.
- Download the myStrength app! uab.edu/humanresources/home/eacc/mystrength Call or email the EACC for your access code. The app is free and confidential!
- Seek supports & use university resources. Reach out to friends and family. If you or someone you know has high distress that does not seem to be lessening, talk about it with others or contact the EACC. We are here to help!

Avoid Stigmatizing or Generalizing

- Be aware of your behavior or attitude change towards others from another country
- Avoid generalizing anyone who is sick as potentially having the Coronavirus
- Examine any irrational or rigid thoughts that can exist when there is uncertainty

*If you are calling after business hours or on the weekends, you may access the EACC on-call counselor by calling UAB Connect at 205-934-3411. If you are experiencing a crisis, call 911, call the Birmingham Crisis Line at 205-323-7777 or text “UAB” to 741741 to text with a crisis counselor.