

Fall 2023

Healthy Together

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Living With Climate Change

Climate change has been linked to fires, floods and other events that impact our well-being.

In fact, the World Health Organization says it is the greatest health threat humans face.

To learn about the dangers in your area, check government Websites or ask local officials for details about the risk of fires and other extreme events. This can help you know how to prepare. You can learn about wildfires and sign up for emergency alerts at <https://wildfire.oregon.gov>.

Here are other ways to help prepare your family:

Plan Your Exit

A crisis may mean you need to leave (evacuate) your home. Plan a few

routes out of your area. Then drive them in advance. Practice packing up your children and pets. Also, make emergency plans for the office, day care and other key places.

Pack a Supply Kit

Must-have items include water, foods that will not spoil fast and medicines. Store them in plastic bins or duffel bags in your home or trunk. For more advice, visit www.ready.gov/kit.

Stay in Touch

Know how to get information in an emergency. You can download free apps now at www.ready.gov/fema-app and www.redcross.org/apps. During an event, tune in to NOAA Weather Radio. Learn how at www.weather.gov/nwr.

Clear the Air

Wildfire smoke and ash can hurt your respiratory system. Over time, some things you inhale can lead to heart and lung diseases, and even cancer. Choose at least 1 room in your home that you can close off from outside air. If you can, install a filter or air cleaner there, too. Keep special masks (respirators) on hand for your family.

The nature of climate change can cause stress and anxiety. Learn ways to ease anxiety on page 2. If you feel overwhelmed or need support, talk to a mental health care provider. For advice on how to find a provider, turn to page 3.

**We are here to help
any day, any time.
24/7 NURSE ADVICE LINE
1-800-562-4620
Call ANY TIME you
want to talk to a nurse.**

Loosen the Grip of Anxiety

Fear, worry, uneasiness. These feelings are normal responses to stress. In an emergency, anxiety helps you react to danger. In less urgent moments, it can help you get things done. But anxiety becomes a problem when it gets out of control.

When anxiety reaches a high level, it can disrupt your life. To help keep this from happening, learn about its symptoms, ways to cope and when to seek help.

Watch for Warning Signs

The first step to managing an anxiety disorder is to recognize the problem. These are some common signs to watch for:

- Persistent feeling of dread
- Sudden attacks of terror
- Physical symptoms, such as a pounding heart, sweating, shortness of breath, dizziness, nausea or headaches
- A sense of impending doom or fear of losing control
- Excessive self-consciousness in social situations
- Intense worry about everyday things

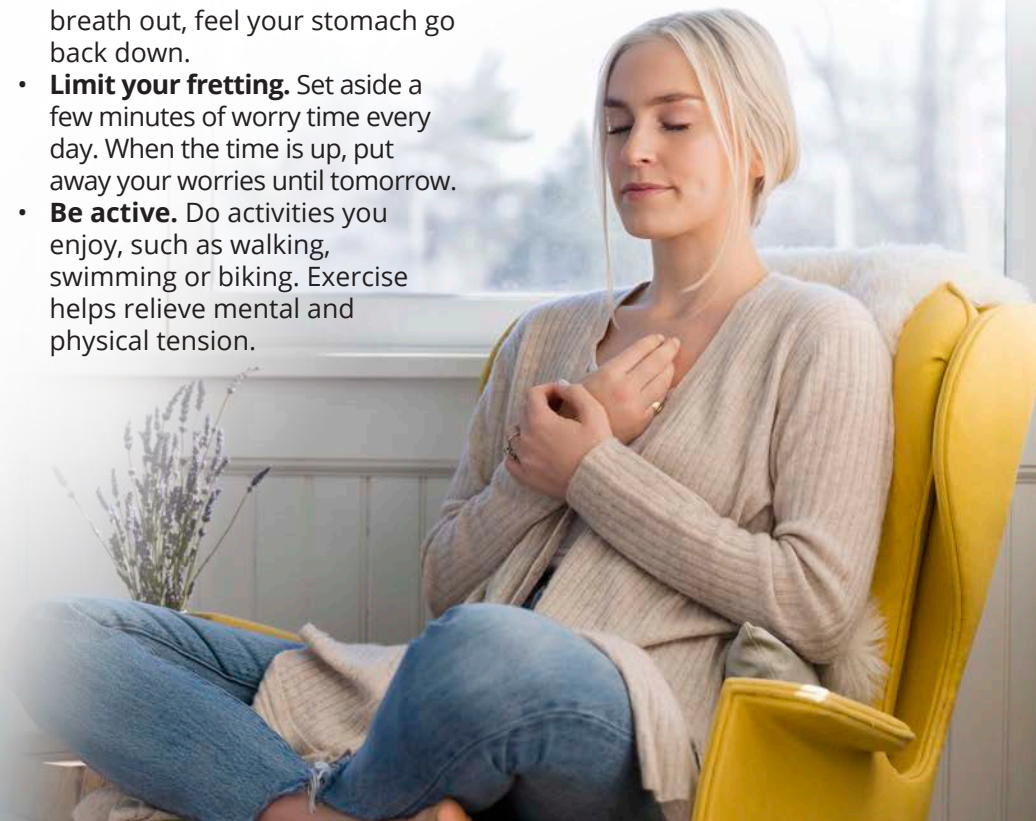
Ease Anxiety

For mild, short-term anxiety, simple steps can help calm your nerves and ease stress:

- **Try deep breathing.** Place 1 hand on your belly just above your navel. Put the other hand on your chest. Then focus on taking slow, deep breaths. With each breath in, feel your stomach rise a little. With each breath out, feel your stomach go back down.
- **Limit your fretting.** Set aside a few minutes of worry time every day. When the time is up, put away your worries until tomorrow.
- **Be active.** Do activities you enjoy, such as walking, swimming or biking. Exercise helps relieve mental and physical tension.

- **Avoid quick fixes.** Turning to alcohol or drugs may seem to relax you in the moment, but doing so can add problems to your life in the long run.

If anxiety is still hard to control or affects your daily activities, talk with your health care provider. Treatment options include therapy and medicines.



health briefs

Sunny Days' Bright Side

Our skin produces vitamin D when exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light. This key vitamin helps our bones and immune system stay strong. But UV rays can also cause sunburn and up the risk for skin cancer. To help balance the risks and rewards, wear sunscreen outdoors and have routine skin exams.



Now Hear This!

Harm from noise exposure adds up over time. To help protect your hearing: Do not set the volume too loud when enjoying music or other entertainment. Wear earplugs to block loud noises, like sounds from power tools. Get your hearing checked if you have any concerns, like problems hearing a doorbell or phone ringer.



Too Sweet?

Cider, cocoa and sweetened coffee drinks. (Pumpkin spice, anyone?) Like regular soda and fruit juice, these fall favorites often have lots of added sugar and hundreds of calories. It is not just weight gain that can increase the risk for type 2 diabetes. Research links sugary beverages to diabetes. Rely on water and make sugary options an occasional treat.



How to Find a Mental Health Care Provider

Mental health issues like anxiety and depression can affect anyone. But people of color often have a harder time getting care for them. The reasons may include:

- Money concerns (financial strain)
- Lack of health insurance
- Language barriers
- Racism

Recent data shows that 76% of mental health counselors are white. If you come from a different cultural background, you may wonder whether there is a provider out there who can meet your needs. The short answer is yes.

Cultural Competence

Mental health care providers can get trained in cultural competence. This term refers to a set of attitudes and practices that help them work well with people from other cultural groups. Providers who are strong in this skill know how to work cultural needs into your treatment plans. They make you feel heard and understood.

In Crisis?

Call or Text 988

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers free, confidential support 24/7 for anyone in distress.

Resources

You can ask your health care provider, a friend you trust or an agency that serves your community to suggest a mental health care provider in your area. These Websites can also help you find a provider:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Enter your ZIP code or other information to find treatment locations. Click “More Info” next to a listing to see what services it offers, languages spoken and more.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

<https://afsp.org/mental-health-resources-for-underrepresented-communities>

View a list of groups that support mental health in Asian American, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Native and Indigenous Peoples communities.

National Alliance on Mental Illness

www.nami.org/your-journey/identity-and-cultural-dimensions

Find information on seeking culturally competent care.





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Online:

www.quitnow.net/oregon

Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or
any other health issues. Visit our Website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Developed by Krames

Help Kids Fend Off Germs at School

Did you know that kids come down with an average of 8 to 10 colds per year? And each infection lasts 2 weeks or longer. That is a lot of time for them to be out of school. It can also be a lot of missed workdays for you.

Here are 4 ways you can help keep germs from sidelining your household:

1 Cover up when you cough or sneeze. Remind your child to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue, not their hands. Then throw the used tissue in the garbage. If they cannot get a tissue out in time, tell them to cough or sneeze into their upper arm or elbow.

2 Wash your hands. Tell them to do it any time they cough, sneeze or blow their nose. They should also do it before they eat and after using the bathroom. Send children ages 6 and older to school

with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. It should contain at least 60% alcohol. Encourage them to use it when they cannot get to a sink. Learn more at **www.cdc.gov/handwashing**.

3 Avoid sharing school supplies. Send your child to school with their own pencils, crayons and other materials. It is easy for germs on these items to spread among children. When your child comes home, use disinfecting wipes on items that are touched a lot, such as toys and electronics.

4 Get a flu shot. This is the best way to protect your child from the flu. Some children need 2 doses of the vaccine up to age 8. Learn more about the flu and how to avoid it at **<http://ohpcc.kramesonline.com/healthsheets>**.

