

# Coping During Stressful Times



Feeling stressed? Sometimes life can feel overwhelming. It is important for both children and adults to know how to cope with stress, anxiety, and other strong negative feelings. Dealing with stress in a healthy way can make you and your loved ones stronger.

## Stress can sometimes cause:



**More fear, worry, and anxiety.**



**Difficulty focusing.**



**Changes in your sleeping or eating.**



**Increased use of tobacco or alcohol.**



**Worsening health problems.**

## Stay informed!

There is a lot of information out there. Be sure you are getting the facts from sources you trust. Visit Meridian's Health Library at [mimeridian.com/health-library.html](http://mimeridian.com/health-library.html) for tips on coping with stress and caring for your mental and physical health.

## Ways to reduce stress:

- Take a warm bath.
- Doodle or color.
- Take a walk.
- Look at the night sky.
- Turn on some music and dance.
- Write in a journal.
- Try meditation or deep breathing.
- Laugh more.
- Find a hobby.
- Get at least seven hours of sleep.

## Keep your body healthy by:

- Eating healthy food.
- Drinking plenty of water.
- Avoiding too much caffeine and alcohol.
- Avoiding tobacco and other drugs.
- Getting enough sleep.
- Getting some exercise.

## Take care of your emotional health by:

- Taking time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Try deep breathing or meditation to ease these feelings.
- Staying connected with others. Having a support system to share your concerns can help you handle stress.

- Getting help when needed. If your feelings are affecting your daily activities or won't go away, talk with a counselor or your provider.

## Help children and teens cope during difficult times by:

- Talking to your children about how they are feeling and answering questions in a way they will understand.
- Reassuring them that they are safe and that it is OK to have strong feelings.
- Trying to stick to a routine.
- Spending time doing fun activities.
- Visiting [michiganvirtual.org/michigan-cares](http://michiganvirtual.org/michigan-cares) for additional resources.



If you are taking medications for mental disorders, stress, or anxiety, it is important to keep taking your medications as prescribed by your provider. If you are having trouble filling your medications, talk to your provider, pharmacist, or health plan for additional help and information.

Your health is always important to us and that hasn't changed, even when things seem so uncertain. Having someone to talk to when feeling stressed, anxious, or down can help ease these feelings.

There are many free resources that you can get without leaving home. To find local mental health or other services, call **211** or visit **[cmham.org/membership/cmhsp-directory](https://cmham.org/membership/cmhsp-directory)**.



**The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) PEER Warmline** offers help from support specialists who can share their own experiences with you. If talking to someone who personally understands mental illness or substance use challenges would be helpful to you, call **1-888-PEER-753 (1-888-733-7753)**. Support specialists are available every day from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m.



Times of change can be very difficult for children as well. Michigan has a no-cost portal that is available to parents, teachers, and children. The portal can help students develop skills for their social, emotional, and mental well-being. Visit **[michiganvirtual.org/michigan-cares](https://michiganvirtual.org/michigan-cares)** for more information.



Meridian knows that texting can sometimes be a better way to communicate. Here are some texting resources that you can use 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

**Crisis Text Line:**

Text the keyword **HOME** to **741741**

**National Disaster Distress Helpline:**

Call or text **1-800-985-5990**



**IF YOU ARE THINKING OF HURTING YOURSELF OR OTHERS, GET HELP RIGHT AWAY:**

Call or text the **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988** (TTY: **711**) anytime 24/7 to talk to someone. This service is free and confidential.

Sources: [cdc.gov/mentalhealth/stress-coping/cope-with-stress/index.html](https://cdc.gov/mentalhealth/stress-coping/cope-with-stress/index.html), [nami.org/Your-Journey/Individuals-with-Mental-Illness/Taking-Care-of-Your-Body/Managing-Stress](https://nami.org/Your-Journey/Individuals-with-Mental-Illness/Taking-Care-of-Your-Body/Managing-Stress)