



Psychosocial Impact & Interventions for Patients & Providers During the COVID-19 Crisis

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Tonya Winders



Our Speakers



Dr. Gia Rosenblum

Clinical Psychologist in private practice and specializes in trauma care

Telehealth Program, Mental Health Professional Guide to Psychosocial Issues in Food Allergy, Allergy & Asthma Network



Dr. Jackie Eghrari

Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, George Washington School of Medicine & Health Sciences

Medical Director, Telehealth, Allergy & Asthma Network



Tonya Winders

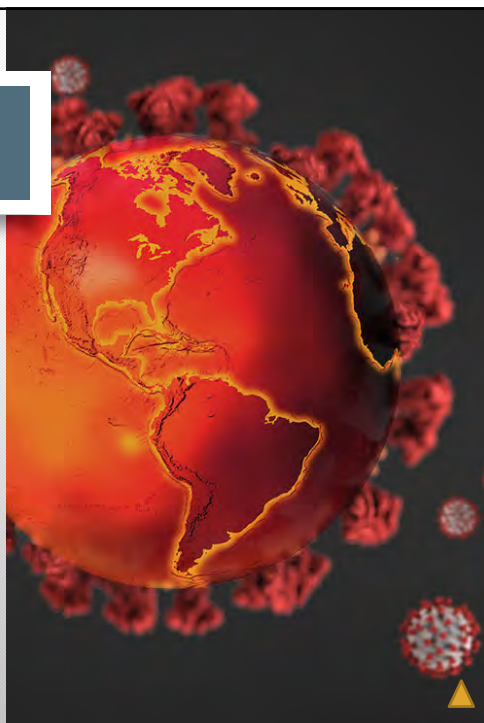
President & CEO, Allergy & Asthma Network

President, Global Allergy & Airways Patient Platform



Outline

- Status of COVID-19
- Medical Guidelines: How to Gain Some Sense of Control
- COVID-19: Coping with Stress
- Allergy and Asthma Network's Commitment to You



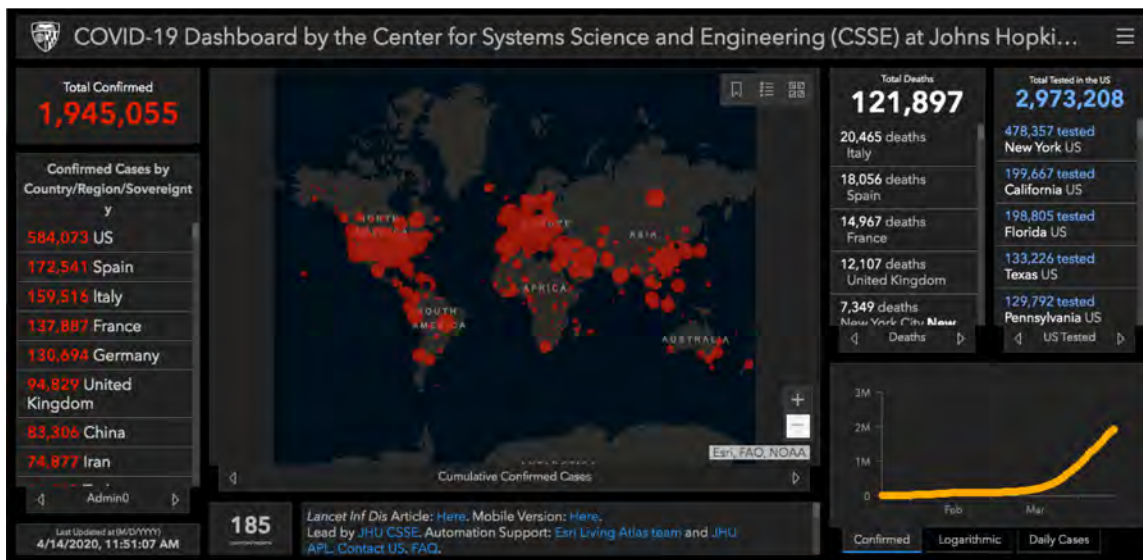
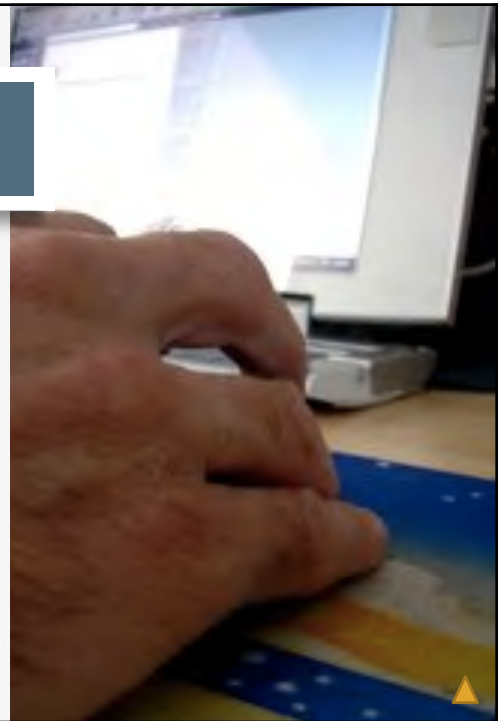
Status of COVID-19

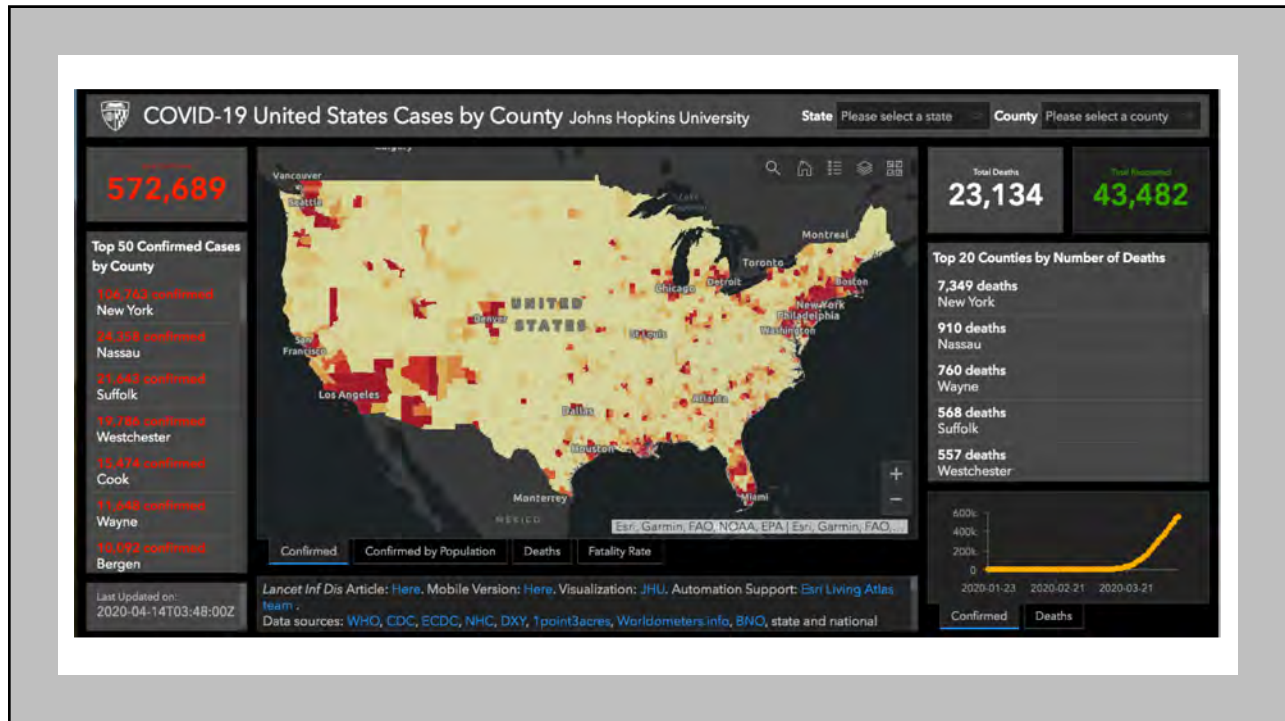
Tonya Winders




This Week's Headlines

- Coronavirus might spread much farther than 6 feet in the air. CDC says wear a mask in public
- 'Worst Is Over,' Cuomo Says as 6 States Ally to Reopen Economy
- US death toll declines for second day in a row
- Trump desires to reopen as quickly as possible
- Stimulus checks received this week for many with direct deposit
- >16 M in unemployment claims





CDC Data Report



States Reporting Cases of COVID-19 to CDC*

Reported Cases
(last updated April 13, 2020)

- None
- 6 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 101 to 500
- 501 to 1000
- 1001 to 5000
- 5001 or more

Territories: AS GU MH FM MP PW HI VI

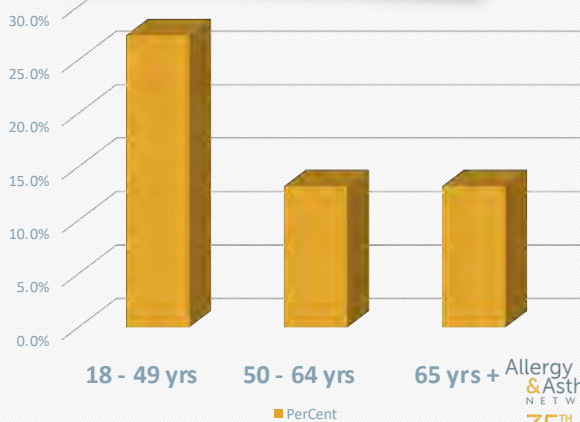
States: +

- CDC updated daily at 4:00 PM
- CDC Resources:
 - Too many to list!
 - How to Protect Yourself
 - What to Do if You Are Sick
 - Self-checker
 - Take Extra Precautions

Hospitalization Data – Asthma Co-morbidity

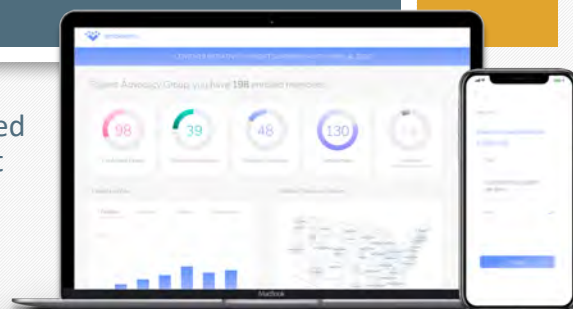
PerCent

- Patients hospitalized with COVID-19 who also have asthma
 - Prevalence in US is ~10%
 - Numbers higher in ages 18 – 49 years is higher than expected
- Ages 18 – 49 years with asthma may be at increased risk of hospitalization



COVID-19 Registry

- Gain insights into how COVID-19 has impacted your life so you can get personalized support from your community
- Your contributions will aid public health and research efforts.
- <https://www.allergyasthmanetwork.org/covid-registry/>





Medical Guidelines: How to Gain Some Sense of Control

Dr. Jackie Eghrari-Sabet

Fear & Anxiety while managing your health

Fear is a natural response to actual, immediate threat

- Chronic fear → anxiety

Anxiety is escalated by

- Feelings of being not in control.
- Memories of past negative events, anticipating these events will come again, with a similar unpleasant outcome.

Quash fear with thinking in the present.

Quell anxiety by taking control of what you can do.

SO what
CAN you
do to
take
control?



What to Access Care For

Allergy & Asthma Network patients are at risk:

- Asthma, immunodeficiency, food & environmental allergy
- Chronic disease is a risk factor, so keep disease in control
- Emergency care is limited and puts you at risk of exposure to COVID
- Physically the goal is to keep allergy & asthma under control
- Psychologically the goal is to feel in control managing your disease



Network Patients & Current Guidance

- Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities.
- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- So ask others to wear their masks for YOU.



When to Access Care

COVID-19

- Fever of 100.4°, worsening cough, fatigue/body aches, difficulty holding breath for 10 seconds

Asthma

- Out of control with frequent cough, wheeze, use of albuterol more than Rule of Twos®, unable to exercise, nighttime symptoms -OR -previous history of two or more asthma attacks a year

Allergy

- Symptoms now occurring in the Spring, especially those that make asthma, rhinitis, risk of sinus infection, bronchitis worse

Food Allergy

- Accidental ingestion, or those with environmental asthma/allergy

Immunodeficiency

- Respiratory symptoms and need for routine follow up



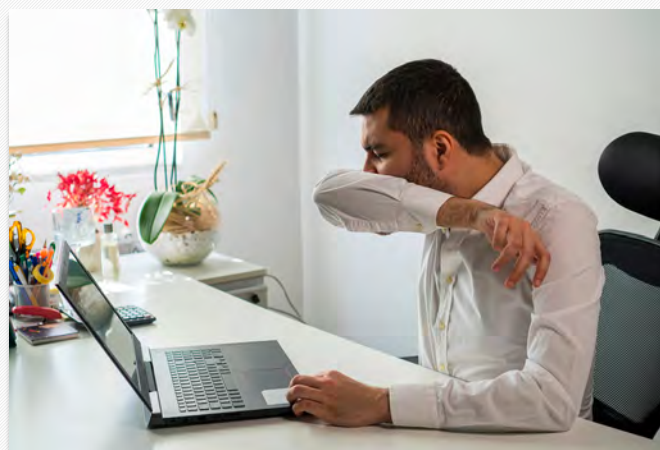
How to Access Care

Telemedicine Benefits :

- Stay at home
- “Family” visits for all caretakers to be present on call
- Have list of questions and undivided time for HCP to answer
- Triage and address questions about testing while staying protected at home

Network Telehealth:

Network to launch food allergy coach, asthma coach, and HCP's on our branded site – May 2020



Current Guidance: Testing

CDC has guidance for who should be tested, but **decisions about testing are at the discretion of state and local health departments.**

Much of this is fluid.

- Most people have mild illness and can recover at home
- There is no treatment specifically approved for this virus, clinical trials are currently underway for COVID + patients
- Antibody testing and more widely available active infection testing will be helpful to inform decision-making about who can return to work, and who should be quarantined




The Effects of Stress on Asthma & Allergies

- Asthma, stress, and anxiety make for a vicious circle, as wheeze & cough get worse, your health becomes one more reason to worry. The treatments of albuterol and prednisone can make you jittery and have mood swings – compounding the cycle
- How do you take control?
 - Stay in contact with your doctor
 - Adhere to medication regimen
 - Keep a careful eye on symptoms
 - Practice deep diaphragmatic/belly breathing




DO THAT ALL NOW!



COVID-19: Coping with Stress

Dr. Gia Rosenblum



COVID-19 , Uncertainty, and Stress



Peters, A., McEwen, B. S., & Friston, K. (2017).

“Over the past forty years, many researchers have defined stressful situations – from a biopsychological perspective – as characterized by *‘no information, no control, uncertainty with a sense of threat’* .”

Being in a medical high-risk group (chronic illness, asthma) is itself a stressor



COVID-19 SOURCES OF STRESS



Stress and Coping

Stress Response

- Fight/Flight/Freeze
- Impacts
 - Our Bodies/Physiology
 - e.g., racing heart, fatigue, insomnia
 - Our Thoughts/Cognition
 - racing thoughts, hard to concentrate, chronic worry
 - Our Emotions
 - anxiety, apprehension, dread, sadness, grief, anger
 - Our Connections
 - Social withdrawal, conflict

Coping

- Active management of physiological, cognitive, and emotional responses
 - Decrease fight/flight/freeze state
 - Increase calm regulated state
 - Increase ability to respond adaptively to life demands
 - Increase access to positive thoughts, emotions, and experiences
 - Increase positive social engagement



Managing Anxiety and Fear in Times of Crisis

1. Acknowledge the Situation

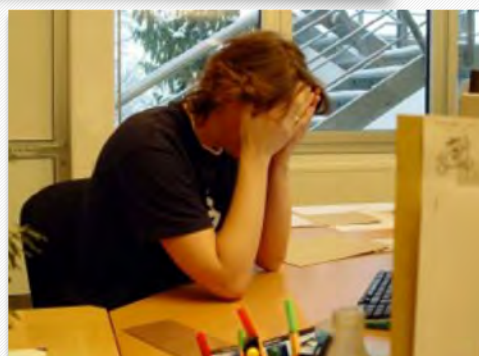
- A major life event that has created ongoing daily stressors
- Short, medium, and long-term coping plans are needed
- Identify:
 - What is known
 - How your situation is like any stressor you have encountered before?
 - Chronic or prior medical issue, medical issue, financial concern, shortage of resources, job loss, family disruption
 - How you have coped in the past
 - What you value personally
 - Family, freedom, education, creativity, career, community, spirituality, etc.
 - How has this specifically been impacted by the situation?



Managing Anxiety and Fear in times of Crisis

2. Acknowledge emotions

- Give yourself permission to have the feelings
 - Try to name all that you feel
- Normal to feel unsettled, concerned, even fearful at this time
- Grief is also normal
 - Loss of normal, structure, social supports, life events
 - Illness and death – even of strangers is painful
 - Concern over those at risk is an indication of empathy and human connection
- These are not overreactions
- Those with prior losses or traumas may be particularly affected
- Children look to adults for cues on how to feel



Managing Anxiety and Fear in times of Crisis

3. Build your coping toolbox

- Tools for
 - Regulating the Body
 - Regulating Thoughts
 - Regulating Emotions
 - Supporting Children
- Most tools work for kids & adults
- Even if you can't change the threat – you can add to your coping toolbox



Tools for Regulating the Body

- Maintain a routine
 - Wake/sleep, meals, school, etc.
- Practice good nutrition
- Get sufficient sleep
- Limit screen time (not just for the kids!), and especially at night
- Get fresh air, sunshine, and exercise – (keep safe social distance)
- Experience nature, indoors or out
 - Houseplants count!
- Take care of your health and medical issues
 - Stay in touch with your providers via telehealth,
 - if you have questions, ask
- Limit use of alcohol and recreational drugs
- Practice relaxation breathing
- Focus on positive physical sensations you experience each day
 - Tastes, smells, touch, movement
 - Pause and notice how they feel
 - Strong but positive smells can help shift a bad mood or anxious state



Tools for Regulating Thought

Event viewed as *Threat* → Fear, Fight/Flight/Freeze

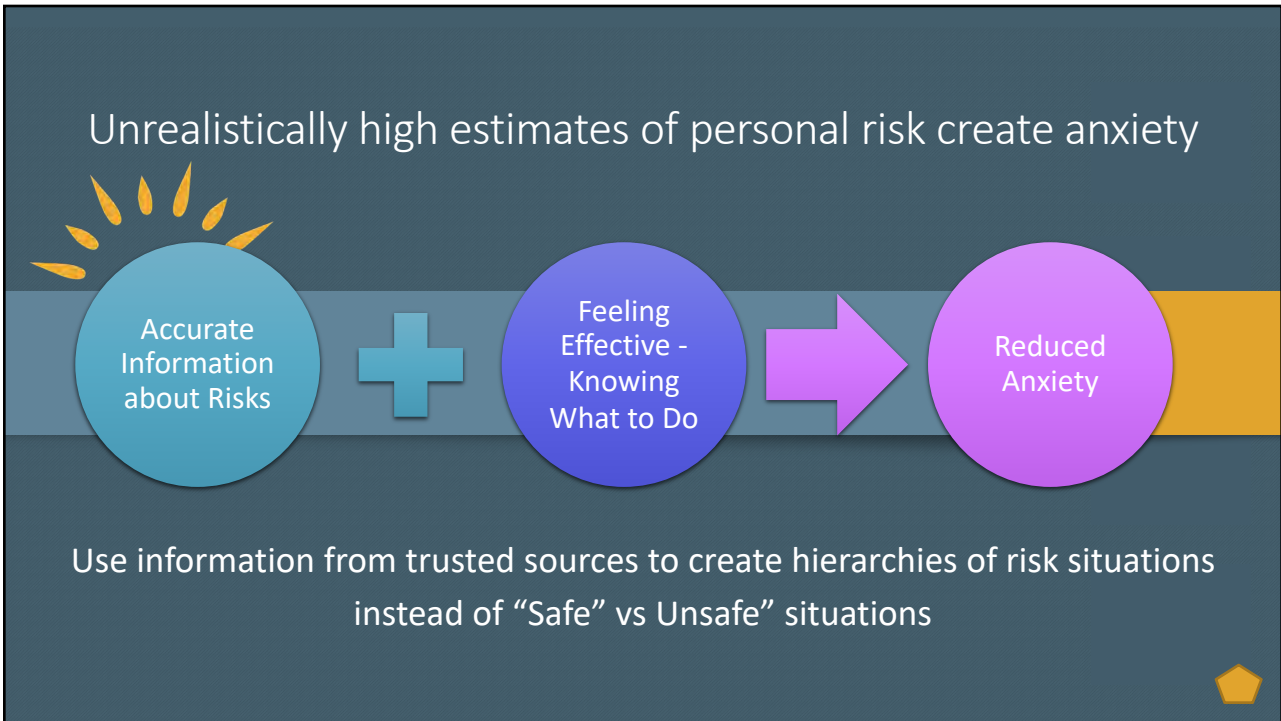
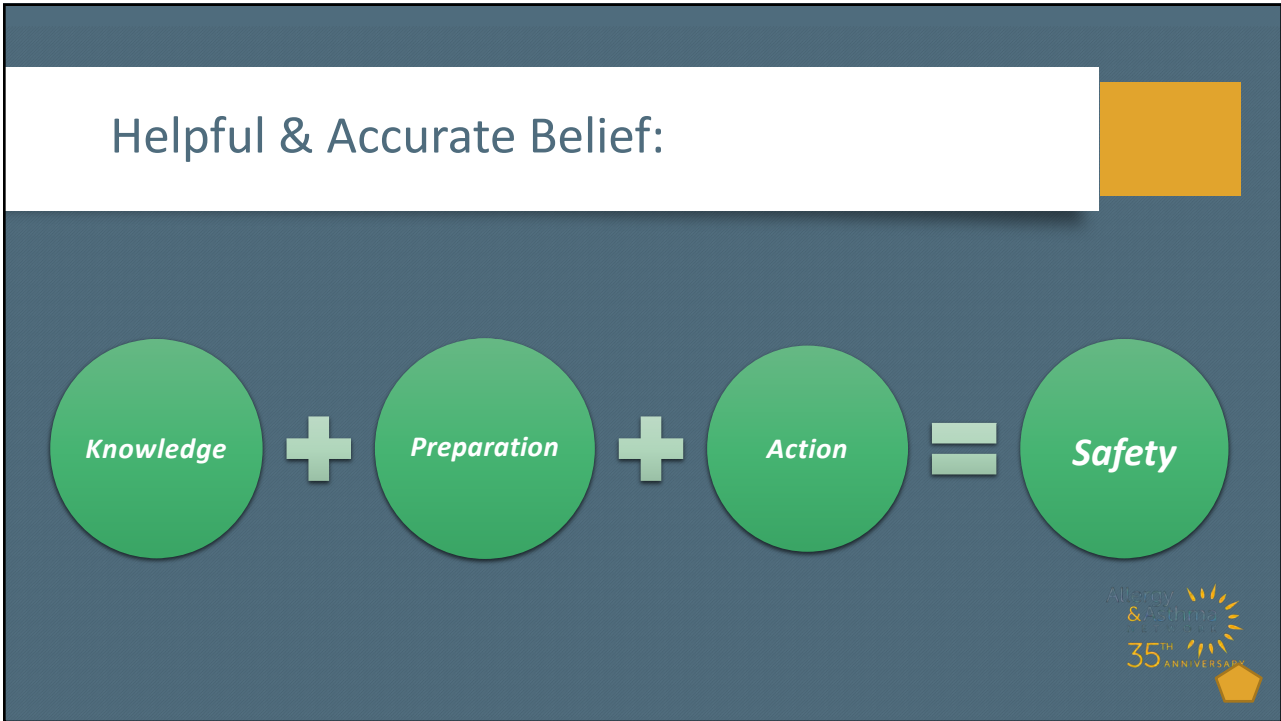
Event viewed as *Challenge* → Mobilization, Curiosity

- What aspects of the situation can be viewed as a challenge?
- Rise to the challenge
 - “What’s the most meals I can make before going back to the store?”
 - “How many days can I say something positive to my kids in the morning?”
 - “How many family members can I call in one week?”



Anxious False Belief:





Tools for Regulating Thoughts

Information Management

- Prevent Overwhelm
- Choose one trusted news source, check 1x early each day.
- Choose **print** over broadcast media, audio over video

Limit time on social media

- Identify prior successful coping strategies
 - what works for you? How can you apply that now?

Identify actions consistent with your values

- Making healthy meals for my family, reaching out to a neighbor, focus on education, focus on play, focus on finances

Plan your strategy

Visualize yourself coping successfully (not perfectly)

Allow input from your logical mind *and* your emotion mind

- Talk to yourself about your strengths, abilities, and resources
- Remind yourself that this situation is temporary
- Remember your emotions are normal
- Notice how emotions are fluid

Provide time for and limits on worry



Tools for Regulating Thought

What I Can Control → Focus Here

- My attitude
- Staying true to my values
- My mindfulness
- My behavior
 - Turning off the news
 - Limiting social media
 - Finding pleasurable things to do at home
 - My own social distancing
 - How I talk to others
 - Following health guidelines
 - for COVID-19, Food Allergy, Asthma, Etc.

What I Can't Control → Let This Go

- How long this will last
- Knowing exactly what will happen next
- Products in the stores
- Other people's
 - Behavior
 - Beliefs
 - Motives
 - Reactions
 - Values



Tools for Regulating Emotion

- Practice Self-Compassion
 - Self-kindness, connection with humanity, mindfulness
- Increase social engagement (not the same as work contacts)
 - call, text, email, video chat
- Use appropriate touch – when safe: hug, hold hands, place your hand over your own heart and feel your breath
- Do for others – reach out, cook/bake, donate, post support on their social media



- Reduce Boredom
 - Try anything
 - Emphasize what is enjoyed and makes you feel successful
- Recognize and accept feelings of pain and loss
- Name the losses, their importance
 - Allow time for processing
 - Situation may delay normal coping rituals & responses
- Identify and use professional supports
 - Telehealth options available



Tools for Helping Children

Reliable daily routine

Wake/sleep, school time, mealtime, free time, family time etc.

Children look to adults for how alarmed they should be

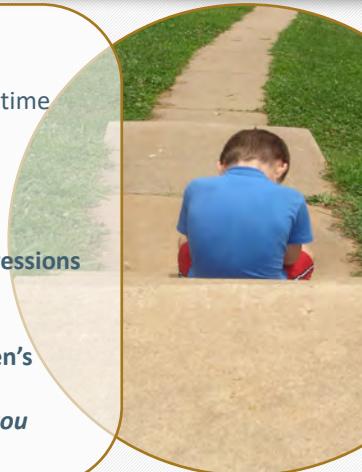
Present a calm demeanor

Stress may create behavior regressions

Be non-judgmental
Increase support of child

Limit or eliminate young children's exposure to news

Take care they don't overhear you talking



Plan what you will communicate to children

Focus on what adults are doing to protect them

Focus on what they can DO to be safe

Older children may appreciate more facts

Share small amounts, wait for questions

Ask about what they have already heard

Prepare with facts to correct misunderstandings

Tweens and teens benefit from

More complete information
Collaborating on coping strategies
Direct teens to reliable news sources





Questions?

Please record your questions in the Question box on your webinar control panel
We will address as many questions as we can



Our Commitment to You

These are unprecedented times for us all.

Allergy & Asthma Network is committed to keeping you informed with evidence-based guidelines and medical recommendations to protect people with respiratory diseases, including asthma and COPD, from COVID-19.

Please donate to help us continue to educate & advocate for patients:

<https://members.allergvsthmanetwork.org/donations/>



Allergy
& Asthma
NETWORK
35TH
ANNIVERSARY



Next COVID-19 Webinar:

**COVID-19 and Asthma:
Lessons Learned and a
Look Forward**

Tuesday, May 5, 2020 – 4:00 PM
Eastern

World Asthma Day Event

Dr. Purvi Parikh
Dr. Jackie Eghrari-Sabet
Tonya Winders



Psychosocial Impact & Interventions for Patients &
Providers During the COVID-19 Crisis

Thank you for listening!

Get guidelines-based information at allergyasthmanetwork.org

