



BACKGROUND: Anxiety disorders affect 40 million adults age 18 and older and are the most common mental illness in the U.S. They are treatable, yet only 36% of those suffering receive treatment. People with an anxiety disorder are three to five times more likely to go to the doctor and six times more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric disorders. Some risk factors for anxiety disorders include genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events. Anxiety disorders affect 25% of children between 13 and 18 years old. Research shows that untreated children are at higher risk to perform poorly in school, miss out on important social experiences, and engage in substance abuse. It's not uncommon for someone with an anxiety disorder to also suffer from depression. Nearly one-half of those diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. (Source: <https://adaa.org/about-adaa/press-room/facts-statistics>)

COPING DURING COVID-19: The coronavirus is causing even more fear and anxiety throughout the U.S., and the impact is greater for people with existing mental health disorders. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, in a given year, 18% will struggle with an anxiety disorder, and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health reports that 7% will have at least one major depressive episode. However, there are ways to cope. First thing in the morning, think of something that you're grateful for. It helps to change brain activity in a positive way. Get into a routine and keep a schedule. This will help keep you focused on the tasks at hand. Get a good night's sleep. According to the National Sleep Foundation, adults need between seven to nine hours of sleep each night. And research shows the amount and quality of sleep has a significant impact on mental health. Spending time outside in the fresh air is associated with a lower risk of developing psychiatric disorders. And, the food you put into your body will affect how you think and feel. Research has documented the positive impact nutrition has on mood and that eating well is associated with lower levels of anxiety and stress. (Source: <https://health.usnews.com/wellness/for-parents/articles/coping-with-anxiety-and-depression-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>)

RESEARCH UNFOLDS FOUR PROMISING TREATMENTS: The World Health Organization (WHO) is conducting a global trial to find out whether any drug can treat infections with the new coronavirus. Researchers and public health agencies are looking to repurpose drugs already approved for other diseases and known to be largely safe. They're also looking at unapproved drugs that have performed well in animal studies with the other two deadly coronaviruses, which cause severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). WHO is focusing on what it says are the four most promising therapies: an experimental antiviral compound called remdesivir; the malaria medications chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine; a combination of two HIV drugs, lopinavir and ritonavir; and that same combination plus interferon-beta, an immune system messenger that can help cripple viruses. "It will be important to get answers quickly, to try to find out what works and what doesn't work. We think that randomized evidence is the best way to do that," says Ana Maria Henao Restrepo, a medical officer at WHO's Emergencies Program. (Source: <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/03/who-launches-global-megatrial-four-most-promising-coronavirus-treatments#>)

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