

# COPING WITH STRESS, ANXIETY, AND SUBSTANCE USE DURING COVID-19

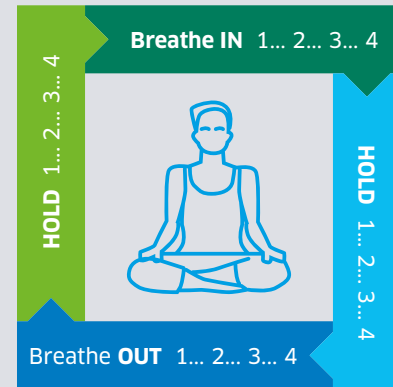
The COVID-19 pandemic has created disruptions in our lives that can cause feelings of stress and anxiety. **These feelings are normal.**

## What you'll experience if you're feeling stressed or anxious

- Fear or constant worry
- Anger or being easily irritated
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating
- Struggling with decisions
- Consuming alcohol, cannabis, or other substances more than usual







## Square breathing

This simple exercise can help calm your nervous system and alleviate feelings of anxiety when you're getting overwhelmed.



When you use alcohol, cannabis, or other substances to cope or temporarily relieve stress and anxiety, it may make those feelings worse and increase the risk of developing a substance use disorder.

## What you can do to cope

-  **Stay active and keep yourself busy** with activities you enjoy.
-  **Stay connected** with friends and family while still practising physical distancing.
-  **Find balance** by staying informed but know when to take a break from COVID-19 news and topics.
-  **Be kind to yourself**, this is a difficult time, and you're doing your best to manage a challenging situation.
-  **Take care of your body** by eating and sleeping well, exercising, and meditating.
-  **Reach out for help!** Talk to a family member or friend, and seek professional support if needed.

## If you use substances

- 1 Monitor your use: pay attention to its frequency and context.
- 2 Follow *Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*.
- 3 Follow *Canada's Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines*.
- 4 Avoid stockpiling alcohol, cannabis, and other substances.
- 5 Reach out for help if you feel your use is becoming a problem.

For more information, visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) or [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/covid19](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/covid19)



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

Financial contribution from



Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada



Canadian Centre  
on Substance Use  
and Addiction

Evidence. Engagement. Impact.