



COPING WITH COVID TESTING AND NEEDING TO SELF-ISOLATE

Getting a COVID test and self-isolating while waiting for your results can be very stressful, especially as many in our community are increasingly being diagnosed. This tip sheet suggests some strategies and support services that may help during this and other times of stress.

Control: You may not be able to determine the results of the test, but you can do things that can help you manage your reactions and your waiting time. Feeling anxious is common reaction to testing, however picturing the worst-case scenario may not be a beneficial way to cope. In fact, doom-and-gloom thoughts may activate the body's flight-or-fight response and a stress reaction. The Islamic principle of "Husn al-Dhun" encourages us to think positively and helps decrease stress.



Faith: It can help to remember that Allah (SWT) places ease with hardship (Quran 94:5-6) that He tests those whom He loves (Sahih al-Jami, No. 275) and that the situation of a Believer is always good - if something good happens, they are thankful to Allah, which is good for them, and if something bad happens, they show patience, and this is good for them also (Bukhari). Making Dua (supplication) and asking Allah (SWT) for help can also help you cope.

Focus: If you find yourself very anxious, you can try to set some time aside to focus on your worries. Write them down and reflect on what is in or out of your control. Try stepping away from what you can't control and remembering that Allah (SWT) has the Best Plan. For things within your control, try listing some solutions. Choose action items that you can do safely while in isolation.



Relax: Try focusing on easy things you can do to help cope and manage feelings, like using Dhikr (remembrances) or journaling. Rest and calming activities can help reduce feelings or overwhelm and work to boost our immune system and build resilience.

Routine: A daily routine with good sleep, self-care, balanced work and break times and healthy meals can really help. Sugary and ultra-processed foods increase inflammation, suppress immune function and affect our mood.



Connection: Although you may be in physical isolation, it is important to stay connected socially and emotionally with others via phone or online. Try a daily phone or online check-in with a buddy.

Children: If you are isolating with your children, it is useful to remember that kids often mirror our anxious cues and that negativity can be very contagious! Try to remain calm in your conversations with children. It is normal for children to have questions. Uncertainty can be frightening for many of us, and children may fill in the gaps with their own imagination or the internet. Encouraging your child to talk about their thoughts and feelings helps to normalise and validate their concerns and decrease anxiety. Try listening to their concerns without judgement. It is okay for children to see adults deal with emotions and some levels of stress, as long as adults explain why they reacted the way they did. Say, for example, you cried when you found out about having to self-isolate with your child. When you feel a little calmer, you could say: "I got really sad earlier about us having to isolate because I was feeling worried about what might happen. Let's come up with some ways we can manage together..."

Movement: It can be difficult when you're waiting for results and are stuck with your own thoughts. Movement is calming to the body and mind. The Prophet (SAW) recommended changing our position when angry and it helps with other stressful situations too. If you are feeling well enough, and it is safe to do so while isolating, you can try light gardening, indoor stretching or exercising. Being mindful of our movements in Salah (prayer) and aiming to undertake them with tranquility can also help.



Breathe: Deep breathing stimulates the part of the nervous system responsible for regulating heartbeat, blood flow and digestion and helps you avoid intense stress responses by calming the body and mind. Some easy breathing exercises can be found on the Smiling Mind App.

Limits: It can help to limit the number of times you check for your results. You can schedule in times to check for your results and to monitor your symptoms.



Unplug: Try to reduce the amount of news you consume. It is okay to seek out the latest COVID info once or twice a day but checking the news every hour or keeping it on all day long can increase stress. Mute social media accounts or groups that cause you anxiety. If you do see something distressing, remind yourself that not everyone experiences the same symptoms, hospitalisation, or treatment.



Seek Support: It is OK to not be OK. Self-isolating does not mean suffering in silence. Support is available if you would like to reach out. The Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service is available 24/7 and interpreting services are available. Phone 1800 512 348 or try <https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/i-need-support.html>



Other free support for families is available through:

- 24/7 National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080 (regarding symptoms).
- Parent Line NSW: 1300 130 052. (9 am-9 pm Monday to Friday, 4 pm-9 pm weekends)
- Lifeline: 13 11 14 (or text 0477 13 11 14 from 12pm – midnight).
- Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36 or www.beyondblue.org.au
- Raising Children Network <https://raisingchildren.net.au>

Or contact these free Muslim Crisis Helplines:



- Hayat Line: 1300 993 398 (9am – 5pm)
- Islamicare Parent & Youth Hotline: 1800 960 009 (9am – midnight)

Practical support: There is help if you need access to goods or services while self-isolating. Many businesses are now delivering fruit and vegetables and Halal meat to your door. School Counsellors can help if you need assistance finding services or supports that can help with emergency food or products. Positive cases and their close contacts who need to self-isolate and are having trouble obtaining groceries can call NSW Health to arrange Food Relief on **1800 943 553**.

School Counsellors are available remotely should a student require counselling and can also provide more information and support to families. Counsellors can be reached at:



- **Greenacre Primary:** counsellingGP@mfis.nsw.edu.au
- **Greenacre Secondary:** counsellingGS@mfis.nsw.edu.au
- **Hoxton Park:** counsellingHP@mfis.nsw.edu.au
- **Beaumont Hills:** counsellingBH@mfis.nsw.edu.au



DUA FOR PROTECTION AND DUA WHEN SICK

Abū Hurayrah reported that a person came to Allah's Messenger (SAW) and said, "Allah's Messenger, I was stung by a scorpion last night." The Prophet (SAW) said, "Had you recited these words in the evening: 'I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created,' it would not have harmed you."

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

"I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created."

(Muslim, 2709)



The Prophet (SAW) also said:

"No servant says this three times in the morning every day and in the evening every night but that nothing will harm him:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

"In the name of Allah, with whose name nothing can be harmed on the earth or in the heavens, for He is the Hearing, the Knowing."

(Tirmidhi 3388)

When anyone was sick, the Prophet (SAW) used to gently rub the area of pain and would say:

رَبِّ النَّاسِ أَذْهَبِ الْبَاسَ اشْفِهِ أَنْتَ الشَّافِي لَا شِفَاءَ إِلَّا شِفَاؤُكَ شِفَاءً لَا يُغَادِرُ سَقَمًا

"O Lord of all people, take away the pain, and give healing for You are the Healer; there is no healing but Your healing, a healing that leaves no trace of illness."

(Bukhārī 5743, Muslim 2191)

