



CLAYTON COUNTY

Board of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19: May Day!

By Dr. Michele Dikkers, Chair of Clayton County Board of Health

May Day!

Sometimes words can mean two different things, depending on context and perspective. Reaching back to 5th grade English class, and a little help from my husband, I am reminded that these words are called homographs.

May Day!

May 1st, the beginning of spring!

OR

May Day!

I need help!

This year it seems to mean both, not one or the other. One minute we are celebrating Spring! The grass is turning green, the flowers are blooming, the birds are singing and migrating, we are dusting off the grills and we are opening up the windows and letting in fresh air.

But our reality is we are stuck at home, limited to traveling to the grocery store and back. We are surrounded by the same four walls, the same people, the same TV stations. We are eating the same home cooked meals with limited carry out, getting tired of our own cooking. We are wearing masks, knowing that they are important to wear, but feeling claustrophobic. We are worrying about who will become ill or if it will be us.

Cabin fever at its peak!

Fear, stress and anxiety. What a trio. We typically look forward to spring because it naturally helps treat these issues by allowing us to open the doors and spread our wings. COVID-19 has clipped our wings. Now what do we do?

There are a number of ways to self-manage stress and anxiety at home. Let's start with the taking a deep breath and know that you are not the only one with these feelings. Everyone has these thoughts and fears. So, what do we do about them?

Management of anxiety and depression starts with a plan.

- Develop a daily routine or schedule.
- Eat healthy, nutritious meals
- Keep a healthy sleep routine, get 8 hours of sleep a night
- Exercise daily
- Find a daily meditation or reflection
- Keep a daily journal or diary
- Find a family activity, even if it is just eating supper at the table together every night, preparing, cooking and clean up time together.
- Call or connect with one or two people each day. Reach out to a family member or friend by phone or social platform

Connecting during this time with your primary care provider can also be beneficial. They want to partner with you on all levels of your health. Call his or her office, make an appointment (telemedicine is a great option). Keep in touch with a support group or your therapist.

We can get through this, one day at a time.

We are in this together.