



Due to the coronavirus outbreak we want to protect our clients and our employees in the coming weeks and won't be offering face to face counselling at our office. But the Team of Restart & Empower will continue to offer help and support for refugees with mental health issues!

Open consultation hours over the phone for refugees:

If you wish to talk about your worries or have questions regarding coronavirus, you can reach the Team of Restart & Empower at the times listed below on the following number:

030 - 666 33 456

- Monday: 11am – 4pm (in German and English)
- Tuesday: 11am – 4pm (in German and English)
- Wednesday: 11am – 4pm (in German and French)
- Thursday: 11am – 4pm (in German and Farsi/Dari or Pashto with language mediation)
- Friday: 11am – 4pm (in German and Arabic with language mediation)

You can also contact us by e-mail (restart-empower@caritas-berlin.de) and we will answer as soon as possible.

Important numbers to call

Berlin's Corona-Virus Hotline daily 8 am - 8 pm only in German	030 – 90 28 28 28
medical services available 24 hours	116 117
emergency (ambulance)	112
Hotline Open Med Berlin medical counselling for people without health insurance	0176 – 631 52 0 94
Children's emergency hotline available 24 hours counselling on family conflicts or violence towards children in German, Arabic, Russian and Turkish	030 – 61 00 61
„Violence against women“-support hotline available 24 hours counselling in 15 languages	08000 116 016
Berlin's crisis hotline available 24 hours only in German	030 – 390 63 10
Muslim spiritual welfare hotline available 24 hours only in German	030 – 44 35 0 98 21



General information

1. How do I become infected with coronavirus?

The virus is passed from person to person. This happens, for example, when coughing, sneezing, speaking or shaking hands with someone. It can also be transmitted via smear infection: For example, when someone sneezes into their hand and touches a door handle, another person can become infected, if they touch the door handle and then touch their mouth.

2. How can I protect myself?

- Keep a distance of around 2 metres to another person
- Don't greet people or say goodbye by shaking hands or hugging
- Avoid crowds of people. When you go outside you are only allowed to be in the company of one person or of people you share a household with.
- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly for at least for 20 seconds. Use soap and wash up to your wrists. Don't touch food with unclean hands and don't touch your mouth, nose or eyes.
- When coughing and sneezing, turn away from people. Don't sneeze into your hand from where the virus can spread easily, but sneeze into the inside of your elbow or into a tissue, which you dispose of into a bin immediately

3. How do I know I have the virus?

If you have coronavirus, you might develop a cough, a cold, a sore throat, a headache, body aches or fever. Some people only have mild symptoms, others feel worse and may develop breathing problems or pneumonia. But the symptoms might resemble an ordinary cold. If you are infected, it can take up to 14 days before these symptoms start to appear. In this period the virus is already transmittable. This is the reason, why it is important not to be in close contact with other people.

4. Why is coronavirus dangerous?

In 80% of people the disease is mild or even without symptoms. In some cases, people with the illness can become severely ill or even die. Those who have died have mostly been older patients and people who were already ill.

At the moment a lot of shops, offices and information centres are closed. This is necessary for people to be able to stay at home and be in contact with each other less. This is how we can stop the virus from spreading too quickly and avoid old and ill people from being infected.

5. What should I do if I have symptoms?

Anyone who has a fever, a cough or breathing problems should call a doctor and arrange an appointment. Don't go to a doctor without making an appointment over the phone first. If you don't know a doctor, you can call the medical services on the following number: 116 117. The social workers in your community home can also help you with this. In an emergency (for example severe acute breathing problems) call the emergency services on the number 112. Anyone who feels ill should have as little contact as possible with other people. Keep your distance to others and when possible stay at home or in your room.

6. What should I do if I've been in contact with an infected person?

If you have been in direct contact with a person who has tested positively for the virus, call the Department of health's corona hotline (030 90 28 28 28, daily from 8 am – 8 pm). This service is in German only. If you live in a community home, inform the home management immediately.



Advice for coping with anxiety and insecurity

- Limit how often you read and watch daily news (advisable would be once in the morning and once in the afternoon). Choose to focus only on reliable sources, for example:
 - Information on the regulations in Berlin (for example: Which offices are open?) in German, Arabic, Tigrinya, Farsi, Italian and English
https://fluechtlingsrat-berlin.de/news_termine/corona/
 - General information on coronavirus in 15 languages, for example Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Pashto, Turkish, Russian:
<http://corona-ethnomed.sprachwahl.info-data.info/>
 - Daily news in German, English, Arabic and Farsi/Dari:
<https://www1.wdr.de/nachrichten/wdrforyou/deutsch/wdrforyou-fragen-zum-coronavirus-de-106.html>
- Only do calming, relaxing activities in the evening. You shouldn't watch, read or discuss the news anymore. This can make sleeping more difficult.
- It is important to stay calm or to consciously relax by doing mindfulness exercises. You can find an exercise at the end of this information sheet. The app <http://almhar.org/> also offers exercises to deal with mental health issues.
- Focus on the facts from reliable sources regarding the illness: About 80% of people recover from the disease without severe symptoms. In Germany there have been very low death rates. Deaths from coronavirus have mainly been older people and people with pre-existing conditions. It is not helpful to believe all people around you are potentially contagious and carry the virus. Tell your anxious thoughts to STOP!
- Self-care in these times stands for having and reinforcing a stable and assured feeling towards yourself. If you're already follow a daily routine, try maintaining it. Plan your day with tasks to carry out. It is important to consciously include pleasant activities and interests in your daily routine. It can help to have a structured daily life – it can give you the feeling of reassurance and being in control. Try to structure your everyday life around the same time: waking up, getting ready, cooking, eating, phoning friends/family, household duties etc.
- Think consciously about what you enjoy doing and what does you good. Take time to enjoy these activities.
- If you notice that you are spending too much time overthinking, having negative thoughts and letting anxiety take over, set your alarm clock and give yourself 30 minutes for these thoughts and feelings. Write them down on a piece of paper. When the time is up, put the paper on one side. It can also be helpful to rip up and throw the paper away. If negative thoughts persist or reappear, fight against them by telling yourself: "Now is not the time for negativity!"



- Keep in contact with your friends and family by phone, (video-) chat and e-mails. It can be helpful to share worries and insecurities with others. Don't hesitate to contact a counselling centre. A lot of organisations are offering counselling over the phone or online.
- There is no total curfew! It is important and healthy to stay active and go for a walk in the fresh air. Just keep the hygiene measures in mind and follow the rules. You can be outside alone or with another person but keep a 2 metre distance to other people. If you become ill, stay under strict quarantine in your home or room for up to 14 days (during this time other people will have to do the shopping for you)
- If you can't go outside into the fresh air, you can also do physical exercises in your room. Movement is important, distracts you from worries and helps you to sleep.
- Don't worry about not having enough food or medical supplies! Supermarkets and pharmacies continue to stay open!
- Here are some thoughts to calm your mind – to fight against increasing worries:
 - This too shall pass! Trust that normality will return. This is not the end of the world. There is no reason to fall into a mood of catastrophic feelings and hysteria
 - Most people are good people and help each other in times of need
 - You are strong! You have overcome difficult times in your life. You will also overcome this new situation.
 - It is a problem we haven't faced before. Keeping your humour can help through these times.
 - If you feel anxiety and panic, try breathing in and out consciously. Having moments of fear is understandable and common in difficult times. Let your anxious thoughts pass and try to think of something positive.
 - Focus on the Here and Now. It doesn't help to worry about what might happen in 3 days or in the next month.
- This small relaxation exercise can help against inner tension and anxious thoughts:
Inhale through your nose and count to three. Exhale through your mouth and count to four. Repeat a few times.
Tell yourself in your thoughts what you can perceive with your senses:
 - 5 things you can see
 - 4 things you can touch
 - 3 things you can hear
 - 2 things you can smell
 - 1 thing you can feel

Finally, inhale through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth once again.

**Wishing you much strength through these exceptional times – You are not alone!
If you wish to talk about your thoughts and fears, give us a call!**