CORONA VIRUS: IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING THE FEAR AND ANXIETY

The University Health Services wishes to advise the Delta State University Community and indeed, all Nigerians of the urgent need to deliberately reduce the fear and anxiety resulting from the increasing incidence of coronavirus in Nigeria. We might not be able to stop the spread, but we definitely have the capacity to reduce the panic and anxiety and fear of the unknown associated with it.

Research has shown that fear and anxiety diminish one’s immunity, which is a very important factor, that determines the severity of the illness for anyone that tested positive. It has been documented that over 70% of those that tested positive have mild symptoms largely due to their immune system. So let us safe-guide our immunity by deliberately reducing the level of fear and anxiety. The Bible states “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones” (Prov.. 17:22).

While you are taking precautionary measures by practicing social distancing, frequent washing of hands, the use of sanitizer as well as respiratory hygiene, there is need to take some of the following measures to reduce fear and anxiety.

- Do not over expose yourself to too much news or discussions about covid-19; especially when you are easily tensed or fearful.
- Keep busy, even when you stay at home. The idle mind is the devil’s workshop. You can make good use of the free time by reading the books you left unread previously, write the books you have been postponing, compose new songs, cultivate a garden/horticulture, learn some craft works, and so on. Just be useful to yourself and others.
- Practice regular physical exercises in the comfort of your home e.g. skipping, jogging etc.
- Practice 4 – 7 – 8 breathing technique. Take a deep breath through your nose for 4 seconds, hold your breath for a count of 7, exhale forcefully through the mouth for 8 seconds, repeat the process 4 times daily.
- Focus upon the bright and positive side of things e.g.
  a) No confirm case in Delta State as of today
  b) Most Nigerian that tested positive have mild symptoms
- Recite and reflect upon positive thoughts and quotes such as:
  - “It seems to me most strange that men should fear; seeing death, a necessary end, will come when it will come” - Shakespeare
  - “Cowards die many times before their deaths, the valiant never taste of death but once” - Shakespeare
  - “God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7)
  - “Happy the man, and happy he alone he who can call today is own, He who secure within, can say: Tomorrow, do your worst, for I have lived today” – Horace.
- Practice meditation, spirituality, prayers and reading of the scriptures.
- Listen to good music and see the funny side of life through humours, jokes and comedies

The daily news about covid-19 is truly enough to scare anyone but panic is not helpful. It reduces the immune system. Let us protect our mental health and remain strong. We shall all overcome this corona virus by God’s grace and power. Amen!