



March 18, 2020

## Panic vs. COVID-19

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Statement from ADAA's Chief Medical Officer – Charles B. Nemeroff, MD, PhD  
and the ADAA Board of Directors

During this time of very heightened concern about the spread of the coronavirus, many individuals, especially those with mood and anxiety disorders, are experiencing somatic symptoms that raised concern about potential infection with the virus.

If you have a fever, shortness of breath and a cough, you should be screened preferably by a drive-through screening station now available in many locations. It is important to note that shortness of breath and other somatic symptoms that resemble the flu in general and COVID-19 in particular are often experienced by patients with anxiety disorders such as panic disorder. Because evaluation in a busy emergency department is associated itself with some risk of contracting the virus, care should be exercised in making the decision to visit such a facility.