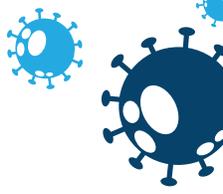


# Mental Health during COVID-19



## It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a stressful situation.

Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Self-care during a stressful situation will help your long-term healing. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and protect yourself and your loved ones.

### For Essential Workers

This is a unique and unfamiliar scenario for all of us. Even so, using ways of coping with stress that have been helpful to you in the past can benefit you now.

### Helping responsibly means taking care of your own health and well-being.

#### Sources of stress can include:

- Long work hours.
- Overwhelming responsibilities.
- Lack of clear job description.
- Poor communication.
- Witnessing suffering.
- Rapidly changing circumstances.

### Taking care of your mental health and well-being is as important as taking care of your physical health.

#### Self-care techniques can help prevent and reduce additional stress:

- Make sure you eat a healthy diet and get enough sleep and exercise.
  - Minimize your consumption of alcohol, caffeine and nicotine and avoid non-prescription drugs.
- Stay up to date on the current situation. However, limit exposure to news, and avoid constant monitoring and questionable sources of information.
- Try to keep reasonable working hours.
- Stay connected with your loved ones including through text, phone, and email is one way to stay in contact, especially during long shifts.
- Check in with co-workers to see how they are doing and have them check in with you – find ways that you can support each other.
- You may be affected by what you experience in a crisis situation, or you or your family may be directly affected by the event. Be sure that you are physically and emotionally able to help others.
- Make an honest decision about whether you are ready to help in this particular crisis situation and at this particular time. Do not take on more than you can manage. Ask for support when needed.

### Reaching out for help is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength.

**CHIMO Helpline - Help is just a phone call away: 1-800-667-5005**

**Hope for Wellness Helpline - The Hope for Wellness Helpline offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people across Canada: 1-855-242-3310**

**Kids Help Phone - Text TALK to 686868 or call 1-800-668-6868 to chat with a volunteer Crisis Responder 24/7.**