

Your emotional wellbeing during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic

Information for patients

The current situation with COVID-19, isolation and physical distancing may be bringing up a lot of different feelings for you and your family. You may be feeling scared, worried, sad, angry, stressed, confused, or many other emotions. This is **normal**. As well as looking after your physical health, it is important that you look after your mental health and wellbeing at this time. Here are some tips and resources that can help you to do this.

Stay connected. Physical distancing doesn't need to mean being socially distant. There are many unique ways to connect with your loved ones and your community. Find online versions of the things that are important to you – exercise groups, games, book groups, and choirs. There are also many apps available that can connect groups of people in a shared virtual space so you can socialise or even have a friends and family 'dinner'.

Develop a routine. Decide on what routine will work for you and those around you, and write it down. This may include work or education, taking your medication, meals and exercise, as well as keeping up with the important things that make you, you – whatever they may be. It can be helpful to include opportunities that give you a sense of achievement, connect you to others, and that you enjoy.

Continue to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Keep trying to follow a lifestyle that maximises your health. A balanced diet, good sleep hygiene and regular exercise are all important. Be mindful of slipping into unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Limit news and information. While it is important to stay informed of what is happening, too much information can make you feel more stressed, worried and agitated. It is important to ensure you are accessing reputable sources, for example gov.uk, Health Protection Scotland, Public Health Wales. Consider allowing yourself just an hour or two each day (not too close to bedtime) to catch up on the news. It can also be helpful to think about how you talk to your children about the situation (please see resources below).

Seek professional support (if needed). As well as talking to trusted family members and friends there are professional resources available. There are some online resources available below. If you are worried about your own emotional health, or that of a loved one, you can call the Samaritans for free on 116 123, talk to your GP, contact your local psychology service or, in an emergency, attend A&E.

Resources for adults

Every Mind Matters

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/

World Health Organization (WHO)

www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2Ajh0hb_suFGdfooVK9IX4o96XYZFWxgaffGur63G6x4dJvskJfAWo7lw

Mind charity

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak

Relate

www.relate.org.uk/covid-19-our-advice-and-tips-healthy-relationships

Free online mindfulness sessions:

Oxford Mindfulness Centre

oxfordmindfulness.org/online-sessions-podcasts/

Headspace

www.headspace.com/

Resources for those caring for children and young people

World Health Organization (WHO)

www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf?sfvrsn=f3a063ff_2

Anna Freud – National centre for children and families

www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/anna-freud-learning-network/coronavirus/

Emerging Minds

- emergingminds.org.uk/supporting-children-and-young-people-with-worries-and-anxiety-coronavirus/
- emergingminds.org.uk/recommended-resources-supporting-children-and-young-people-with-worries-and-anxiety-links/
- emergingminds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19_advice-for-parents-and-carers_20.3_.pdf

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