

STAYING MENTALLY HEALTHY DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The **COVID 19** epidemic has affected all aspect of our lives. It has a potential to affect the mental health of all of us. It is common for people to be feel stressed and worried. People may be worried about falling ill or dying. They may also be worried about the well being of their family members. They be also be worried about the losing their livelihood. They may also suffer from hopelessness, powerlessness, loneliness and depression.

We should take the following steps to protect our mental health.

Limit the news and choose carefully what you read or watch

Getting continuous news about coronavirus may lead to anxiety, so we need to limit the news we receive. Limit the amount of time you spend on reading or watching things that don't make you feel better. As there is a lot of fake and unreliable news read news from trusted sites like WHO, CDC or government websites.

Have breaks from social media

Have breaks from social media. Log on to social media only once or twice a day. Stop following social media accounts or groups which make you anxious.

Maintain Hygiene

Wash your hands but not excessively. You should wash your hands at certain intervals for twenty seconds. Avoid washing hands ritualistically or repeatedly just to feel just right.

Stay connected with family and friends

If you are in self-isolation use video calls, phone and texts to remain connected with friends and family members.

Don't use alcohol, smoking or drugs to cope with stress

Adopt healthy lifestyle

Eat a balanced and nutritious diet. Drink plenty of fluids. Get some exercise. Get exposed to fresh air and sunlight as much as possible. Do something pleasurable. Read a book, watch your favorite movie, listen to your favorite song or watch a comedy show. Try yoga and meditation to calm yourself. Accept that some amount of anxiety is normal in such period. Remember that this epidemic will get worse and then pass off one day.

Take professional help if needed

Don't hesitate to consult a psychiatrist if you suffer from severe distress or if you are persistently unable to sleep and eat.

