

Looking after our mental health during COVID-19

As countries introduce measures to restrict movement as part of efforts to reduce the number of people infected with COVID-19, more and more of us are making huge changes to our daily routines.

The new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues take time to get used to. Adapting to lifestyle changes such as these and managing the fear of contracting the virus and worry about people close to us who are particularly vulnerable, are challenging for all of us. They can be particularly difficult for people with mental health conditions.

Fortunately, there are lots of things that we can do to look after our own mental health and to help others who may need some extra support and care.

Here are tips and advice that we hope you will find useful:

- 01 Keep informed.** Listen to advice and recommendations from your national and local authorities. Follow trusted news channels, such as local and national TV and radio, and keep up to date with the latest news from @WHO on social media.
- 02 Have a routine.** Keep up with daily routines as far as possible or make new ones.
- 03 Minimise newsfeeds.** Try to reduce how much you watch, read, or listen to news that makes you feel anxious or distressed. Seek the latest information at specific times of the day, once or twice a day if needed.
- 04 Social contact is important.** If your movements are restricted, keep in regular contact with people close to you by telephone and online channels.
- 05 Alcohol and drug use.** Limit the amount of alcohol you drink or don't drink alcohol at all. Don't start drinking alcohol if you have not drunk alcohol before. Avoid using alcohol and drugs as a way of dealing with fear, anxiety, boredom, and social isolation.
- 06 Screen time.** Be aware of how much time you spend in front of a screen every day. Make sure that you take regular breaks from on-screen activities.
- 07 Video games.** While video games can be a way to relax, it can be tempting to spend much more time on them than usual when at home for long periods. Be sure to keep the right balance with off-line activities in your daily routine.
- 08 Social media.** Use your social media accounts to promote positive and hopeful stories. Correct misinformation wherever you see it.
- 09 Help others.** If you are able to, offer support to people in your community who may need it, such as helping them with food shopping.
- 10 Support health workers.** Take opportunities online or through your community to thank your country's health-care workers and all those working to respond to COVID-19.

If you or your loved one needs support during this time, reach out to your ICAS EHWP via your toll-free number or the ICAS On-the-Go App to seek counselling support.

Toll-free:
(from land and mobile phones)
Or request a call back: *134*905#

Company App Code:
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