

The New Corona Virus (COVID-19) Preventive Guide for Mental and Social Health

About

Coronavirus (COVID-19) belongs to a large family of viruses that cause diseases ranging from common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS-CoV). Most cases were registered initially in the Republic of China. but COVID-19 has spread to several countries around the world .

How does (COVID-19) spreads:

When a person with (COVID-19) coughs or exhales, he releases droplets of fluid infected with the disease, and those droplets fall on surfaces and nearby objects such as offices, tables or phones .

Then the disease is transmitted when people touch those contaminated surfaces and touch their eyes, mouth, or face afterward .

It is also possible for the disease to transmit if a person is standing one meter or less away from the person infected with (COVID-19) by direct contact through the diffused droplets from those infected.

Know that most people with (COVID-19) suffer from mild symptoms and recover from it, some may experience more serious symptoms and may need hospital care .

Risk of infection:

The risk of infection increases among some groups, such as:

- 1 -The elderly.
- 2 -People who have chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart and lung diseases and renal failure.
- 3 -People with a weak immune system.

Symptoms of infection:

The main symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath, and sometimes symptoms can develop into pneumonia. The infection may cause severe complications for people with a weak immune system, chronic diseases, and the elderly .

Preventive measures to prevent infection :

- Avoid close contact with people who have a respiratory symptom
- wash your hands before touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- cover your mouth and nose with tissues while coughing or sneezing then dispose them
- wash your hands with water and soap or by using sterilizers
- clean and sterilize tools and surfaces that you touch constantly

The outbreak of an infectious diseases such as the COVID-19 outbreak these days considered a serious matter of concern and might affect mental health. Many people love to watch the news to stay informed, and here we will mention things you can do to support your mental and social health in these days.

This file has been prepared to provide awareness messages targeting various groups of the population to support their mental, psychological and social health during the period of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Who are the most vulnerable to stress and fear?

- Older people with chronic diseases.
- Children and teens.
- The first responders to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers.
- People with mental disorders.

What can stress during an infectious disease outbreak include?

- Fear about your own health and your loved one's health.
- Changes on sleep and eating patterns and difficulty in concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Increased use of tea. coffee. tobacco. or drugs.

Things you can do to overcome stress:

1. Take breaks from watching, reading and listening to the news, including the social media.
2. Watch the latest news once or twice a day, because watching a lot of news reports about the disease outbreak makes anyone feel stressful.
3. Get the facts about the disease from reliable sources, because reliable and accurate news may reduce fears.
4. Take care of yourself and your health and try to do some activities you enjoy.
5. Learn simple exercises that you can do in your home during the isolation or the quarantine to keep you active and reduce boredom.
6. Eat healthy and balanced meals, exercise regularly and get enough of sleep.
7. Protect yourself and be supportive to others, because helping others is beneficial to both the receiver and the provider.
8. Make time for self-care and relaxation.
9. Connect with others, talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling. Call your relatives and give support to people who need it.

How to take care of children

children and teens react to actions from adults around them, so when parent deals with the pandemic confidently and calmly they can reassure others around them, especially children. Generally, not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way.

Here are some common changes to watch for:

1. Excessive crying or irritation in younger children.
2. Returning to behaviors they have overcome (for example bedwetting).
3. Excessive worry or sadness.
4. Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits.
5. Irritability and misbehavior from teens.
6. Poor school performance or avoiding school.
7. Difficulty in concentrating.
8. Avoiding activities, they enjoyed in the past.
9. Headache and body pain.

Things you can do to support your child:

1. Talk to your child about the outbreak of the virus, answer his\her questions and share facts in a simple way to make him\her understand.
2. Reassure your child he\ she is safe, tell him\her it is ok if they feel upset and share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
3. Help children to find positive ways to express fears and sadness. Since each child has his\ her own way in expressing feelings, so try to involve them in some creative activities such as playing and drawing, because they will feel comfortable if they manage to express their annoying feelings in a safe and supportive environment.
4. Limit your family's exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
5. Try to keep up with your regular routine, encourage your child to create a schedule for learning, relaxing and fun activities
6. Encourage your children to take breaks, get enough of sleep, exercise and eat healthy food.

How to take care of older people:

Older people who suffer from a worsening in the cognitive ability, are getting more worried, angry, stressed and unsocial during a disease outbreak or during times of isolation and quarantine.

Things you can do to support older people:

1. Provide them with facts about the current situation and accurate information on how to reduce the risk of infection simply and repeat the information if necessary.
2. Summarize the information and clearly provide them with a gentle manner, also it will be useful to write the information or use pictures.
3. Make sure all medications that they need are available for at least 2 weeks.

Tips for health care providers:

It is normal for anybody especially health workers to feel stressful in this current situation, this feeling doesn't mean that you can't do your job or you are a weak person. In this time, you should manage your stress and take care of your psychological and social safety as well as your physical health.

Here are some tips for you:

1. Acknowledge that stress can affect your performance.
2. Communicate with others including using the social media.
3. Make time to you and your family.
4. Create a list of activities that you enjoy, such as spending time with friends and family, exercising, or reading a book.
5. Take a break from media coverage of COVID-19.
6. Ask for help if you feel overwhelmed or concerned that COVID-19 is affecting your ability to care for your family and patients.

Tips for managers in health facilities:

Protection workers from chronic stress and poor mental health during the response means that they will have a better ability to fulfill their roles.

1. Make sure you have good communication with all workers and share the latest and accurate information with them.
2. Rotate workers from higher-stress to lower-stress functions.
3. Facilitate workers' access to mental health and psychosocial support services, and make sure they know where the places that provide these services.

For Help, Call the psychological counseling center
920033360, or through the psychological
counseling application (qariboon) that belong to
the National Center for mental health promotion

