

Mental health impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19)

It's normal to feel stress and worry when there is a health event happening in the community that is affecting people's wellbeing, such as coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

This can affect any person in the community who is concerned about the infection, with more specific concerns arising for people being tested, people in quarantine and people who have received a diagnosis.

Family and friends can also experience similar mental health impacts.

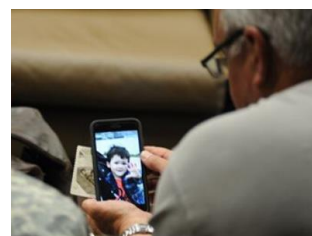
Potential mental health impacts on people directly affected:

- > Increased anxiety for self and others (this can be expressed as a fear for one's own health, and a fear of infecting others)
- > Psychological distress
- > Perceived stigmatisation
- > Social isolation
- > Interruption to employment or study
- > Impact on normal daily routine and functioning

Isolation can be particularly challenging.

There are things that you can do to look after your mental health and wellbeing during isolation:

- > Maintain a daily routine as much as possible, including your normal sleep routine.
- > Stay connected with family and friends and other supports through the use of technology. Face to face Skype, Facetime and other technology can be helpful.
- > Look after your physical health through regular healthy meals. Most people in isolation will either have family, friends or services delivering regular meals.
- > Don't over-indulge in alcohol or comfort foods.
- > Beware of overexposure to news sources. Keeping informed can be helpful, but repeated bulletins about coronavirus may lead to distress.
- > Be aware that mood changes – periods of sadness, anxiety, frustration and fear are common. Should these symptoms become severe or persistent then seek help.
- > As much as possible, continue doing activities at home that you enjoy.
- > Access internet or phone based support if needed.



Telephone and online based supports:

- > **Beyond Blue**
1300 22 4636
www.beyondblue.org.au
- > **Lifeline Australia**
13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au
- > **Regional Access Program** (country areas) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
1300 032 186
<https://saregionalaccess.org.au>
- > **Lived Experience Telephone Support Service (LETSS)** 5pm – 11:30 pm
(a peer mental health support line)
1800 013 755
www.letss.org.au

For people under 25 years of age:

- > **Youth Beyond Blue**
1300 224 636
- > **eheadspace**
1800 650 890

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of the following, please seek professional support:

- > Finding it difficult to participate in normal daily activities
- > Loss of hope or interest in the future
- > Experiencing an overwhelming sense of fear or sadness that is severe or lasting too long

Contact your GP for an appointment to consider whether a mental health treatment plan for access to low cost or no cost counselling services would be helpful.

For people experiencing significant mental health impacts or those who need more immediate support:

Mental Health Triage - 13 14 65

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (country and metropolitan areas)

For more information

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019

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