Mental Health During COVID-19

Signs of stress during an outbreak like COVID-19 can include:
- Fear and worry about you or your loved ones' health.
- Changes in sleeping or eating patterns.
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic & mental health problems.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

Managing Stress During COVID-19
There are steps you can take to cope with stress:
- Recognize the signs of stress.
- Talk to your doctor and people you trust about how you're feeling.
- Limit time on the internet – read books.
- Take care of your body:
  - Get regular exercise and plenty of sleep
  - Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate
  - Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Find time for things you enjoy doing.

People at Higher Risk for Severe Illness
People at high risk, such as older adults, are also at increased risk of stress due to COVID-19. Common reactions include:
- Concerns about their health because they’re at higher risk.
- Concerns that regular medical care may be disrupted.
- Feeling socially isolated.
- Increased level of distress due to:
  - Experience stigma because of age, race, or ethnicity
  - Live in lower-income households or have language barriers
  - Pre-existing mental health concerns

Supporting Your Loved Ones
- Check in with them by phone, email, mailing letters or cards, or video chat.
- Get them a 4-week supply of prescription medications.
- Monitor what other medical supplies they need.
- If they live in a care facility, monitor the situation and speak with facility administrators.

Resources If You Would Like to Talk to Someone
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota (NAMI)
  - Offers virtual support groups and resource guide for parents and caregivers of children.
  - Warm line – 651-288-0400 or text “SUPPORT” to 85511
- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)
  - Has adult mental health crisis team – call your county’s crisis response phone number.
  - Crisis text line – text “MN” to 741741
- SAMHSA
  - Disaster distress helpline – 1-800-985-5990

Sources:

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