



Don't Give Up During the Fight Against COVID-19

As we enter the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, anxiety and stress levels continue to rise for many Canadians. In addition to increasing mental health concerns, COVID-19 fatigue is also at an all-time high. For many, this pandemic feels like it's never-ending. Unfortunately, the battle against COVID-19 is not over, and we must continue to do our part to combat transmission and keep our communities safe. Here's what you need to know about addressing your mental health at this point in the pandemic.

How COVID-19 fatigue is affecting us

We're officially a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, and yet no end is in sight. Each day brings a new higher case count than the next, and it seems as though government restrictions change almost weekly. Additionally, no matter where you look - on TV, the Internet, or in your community, you're bound to come across COVID-19 information. It's no wonder why so many people are tired of hearing about COVID-19. Nevertheless, if you choose to become complacent with our current situation, your actions may be prolonging this pandemic. So how can you continue to do your part while still attending to your mental health?

1: Practice self-care

With so much beyond our control right now, focus on what you can control. Get more sleep, read a new book, have a warm bath, or take a walk somewhere quiet - whatever you do, now is the time to prioritize your well-being.

2: Challenge yourself

Learn a new skill or language, pick up an instrument, or improve your knowledge on a certain topic. If you spend your time challenging yourself each day by learning something new, you won't focus on what you can't do, and rather will spend your time and energy on self-improvement.

3: Enjoy outside

With the arrival of hotter weather it's important for you to get outside. Vitamin D, which we get from sun exposure, is central for our bodies to function properly. Whether you visit a park, hiking trail, beach or any other outdoor space, remember to respect physical distancing guidelines to keep yourself and others safe.



4: Limit social media use

Set limits on how often you use social media, especially if you're at home where it's tempting to check in more often. Don't let a constant stream of tweets, status updates, and conflicting opinions overwhelm you. Keep in mind that there is a lot of misinformation and even disinformation floating around social media, especially in regard to COVID-19. If you need to, unfriend or block "friends" who may be contributing to your stress levels.

5: Read only reliable news sources

Stay informed by reading only reliable sources, such as the Government of Canada Public Health websites, and the WHO. Other news sources may be less accurate, and they may cause feelings of panic and concern. If you're looking for accurate information regarding COVID-19 vaccines, reference the manufacturer website, legitimate scientific journals, or government websites. In fact, you may even consider taking a break from reading or watching the news for a day or two. While it's important to keep informed, taking a break from the news may lessen any COVID-19 fatigue you're experiencing.

Handling self-isolation and quarantine

With the new, more contagious COVID-19 variants, it's never been more important to follow proper self-isolation and quarantine measures. If you're showing flu-like symptoms, working remotely, or simply self-isolating, here are some specific tips to get your through the next few weeks and months.

1: Maintain your routine

It's important to maintain a sense of normalcy, where possible. If you're working remotely, check in with coworkers, and try to stick to a typical daily routine. You never know - you might even be more productive than usual!

3: Enjoy outside

With the arrival of hotter weather it's important for you to get outside. Vitamin D, which we get from sun exposure, is central for our bodies to function properly. Whether you visit a park, hiking trail, beach or any other outdoor space, remember to respect physical distancing guidelines to keep yourself and others safe.



2: Stay in touch where possible

Whether you use video chats, emails, or voice calls, check in with family, friends, and colleagues regularly. Send each other gifts, have virtual movie nights, and keep your spirits up.

3: Ask for help

If you're feeling lonely, or you need help getting supplies during the isolation period, reach out to coworkers and your local community. You'd be surprised how many people are willing to help at a challenging time like this.

4: Look after your body

Don't neglect your body just because you're stuck at home. Try out meditation, mindfulness, yoga, or other at-home workouts, and eat nutritious meals - your body needs all the support it can get right now.

5: Stay home if feeling unwell

Now is not the time to risk going into work sick. Even if you have the mildest of symptoms or you may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, stay home and limit exposure to anyone you may live with.

Conclusion and Using the EAP

Everyone reacts to stressful situations and changing circumstances differently, and it's natural to feel overwhelmed right now. Your Employee Assistance Programs is a go-to source for help and support. Keep your EAP "top-of-mind" for when the going gets tough with any life concern. Aspiria is offering remote emotional support for clients who are having difficulty with anxiety, and/or are being affected by COVID-19 directly. This includes: in-the-moment telephonic support, scheduled telephonic counselling, video counselling, and, e-counselling. Take care of yourself, your family, your friends, and your coworkers, and don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

Remember, we're all in this together - stay connected to those around you, focus on what you can control, and don't allow yourself to burnout.