



COVID FATIGUE

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(Photo: The Enterprisers Project, 2020)

DEFINING COVID FATIGUE

- A natural and expected reaction to sustained and unresolved adversity in people's lives
- Expresses itself as emerging demotivation to engage in protection behaviors and seek COVID-19-related information and as complacency, alienation and hopelessness
- Evolving gradually over time and affected by a number of emotions, experiences and perceptions as well as the cultural, social, structural and legislative environment

(Pandemic Fatigue: Reinvigorating the Public to Prevent COVID-19, 2020)

DEFINING COVID FATIGUE

- The World Health Organization (WHO) uses the word *fatigue* to refer to the exhaustion we feel, tiredness And feelings of being “worn out”. While the use of the word *pandemic* “indicates that we are focusing on Fatigue related specifically to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed to contain it”.
- People may be less likely to follow public health guidance and grow tired of pandemic measures
- Can be experienced differently for everyone





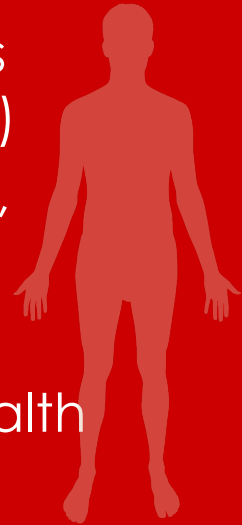
Clean
your mind
Don't panic



HOW IT IMPACTS OUR HEALTH

PHYSICAL

- Alterations to sleeping patterns (insomnia, lethargy)
- Changes in eating habits (eating more, eating less)
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs
- Low energy
- Worsening of chronic health problems



MENTAL

- Restlessness
- Irritability, Anger
- Decreased motivation
- Difficulty concentrating on tasks
- Loneliness
- Increased anxiety
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Loss of interest
- Feeling hopeless or depressed



HOW WE RESPOND

How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from other people, and the community you live in.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19
- Children and teens
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors, other health care providers, and first responders
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use

(COVID-19 and Your Health, 2021)

RISK FACTORS

Older adults and adults with disabilities who are most at risk for severe emotional stress or anxiety include those with a history of:

- Exposure to other traumas, including severe accidents, abuse, assault, combat or rescue work
- Chronic medical illness or psychological disorders
- Chronic poverty, homelessness, or discrimination
- Those who lost a loved one or friend involved in an infectious disease outbreak
- Those who lack economic stability and/or knowledge of the English language
- Older adults who may lack mobility or independence
- Older adults who rely upon others for daily assistance

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR OLDER AND DISABLED ADULTS

- Declines in physical and/or cognitive functioning
- Loss of social connections
- Dependent on others for care
- Lack of informal caregiver help/support
- Retirement
- Chronic pain and other medical conditions
- Access to transportation
- Assisted living facility (ALF) care or skilled nursing facility (SNF) placement
- May be living on a fixed income, lack of assets



(Photo: pngimg.com, Creative Commons, 2021)

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE

- The challenges of caring for a loved one can have a huge impact on us.
- By spending time focusing on ourselves and maintaining our physical and emotional health, we are better prepared to care for the needs of others.
- Remember that any amount of time that you take for yourself is important. “Being out of ‘caregiver mode’ for as little as five minutes in the middle of a day packed with obligations can be a meaningful reminder of who you are in a larger sense. It can help you from becoming consumed by your responsibilities”.

(How Proper Self Care Can Reduce Your Stress Levels, 2021)

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE

- Can help us to be more mindful and recognize the positive things in our life
- Everyone can benefit from it!
- Say “NO” to guilt! Self-care is not selfish, it is necessary
- Generates soothing feelings
- Offers alone time
- Helps us manage stress
- Makes you a better caregiver
- Can improve physical and emotional health



(Photo: 24 Hour Home Care, 2018)
(How Proper Self Care Can Reduce Your Stress Levels, 2021)

YOU DEFINE
WHAT SELF CARE
MEANS TO YOU.



20/06/16
IG: FRIZZKIDART

(Photo: Pinterest, 2020)



COVID SELF-CARE DO'S



- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19
- Make time to unwind
- Engage in activities that bring comfort or joy
- Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate
- Exercise as you are physically able
- Sleep
- Take your medication as prescribed
- Consume healthy (and regular) well-balanced meals
- Keep a routine
- Phone a friend or family member
- Share how you are feeling
- Call your health care provider if stress reactions interfere with your daily activities for several days in a row
- Follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and your state/local public health authorities

(covidLINK | Maryland Department of Health, 2021)



COVID SELF-CARE DON'TS



- Don't consult unreliable sources for information (i.e. social media)
- Don't consume alcohol, drugs or other illicit substances
- Don't make major life decisions
- Don't focus on what is outside of your control
- Don't skip meals
- Don't miss your medications
- Don't forget to drink your water
- Don't skip your doctor's appointments
- Don't ignore your feelings
- Don't hesitate to reach out if you need help
- Don't be so hard on yourself

WHAT CAREGIVERS CAN DO

Check in with your loved ones often.

- ✓ Telephone
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Mailing letters or cards
- ✓ Text messages
- ✓ Video chat (Skype, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.)
- ✓ Social media



(COVID-19 and Your Health, 2021)

WHAT CAN CAREGIVERS DO

Help keep your loved ones safe.

- ✓ Know what medications your loved one is taking.
- ✓ Try to help them have a 4-week supply of prescription and over the counter medications and see if you can help them have extra on hand.
- ✓ Monitor other medical supplies (oxygen, incontinence, dialysis, wound care) needed and create a back-up plan.
- ✓ Stock up on non-perishable food (canned foods, dried beans, pasta) to have on hand in your home to minimize trips to stores.
- ✓ If you care for a loved one living in a care facility, monitor the situation, and speak with facility administrators or staff over the phone. Ask about the health of the other residents frequently and know the protocol if there is an outbreak.

(COVID-19 and Your Health, 2021)

WHAT CAN CAREGIVERS DO

Take care of your own emotional health.

Caring for a loved one can take an emotional toll,
especially during an outbreak like COVID-19.



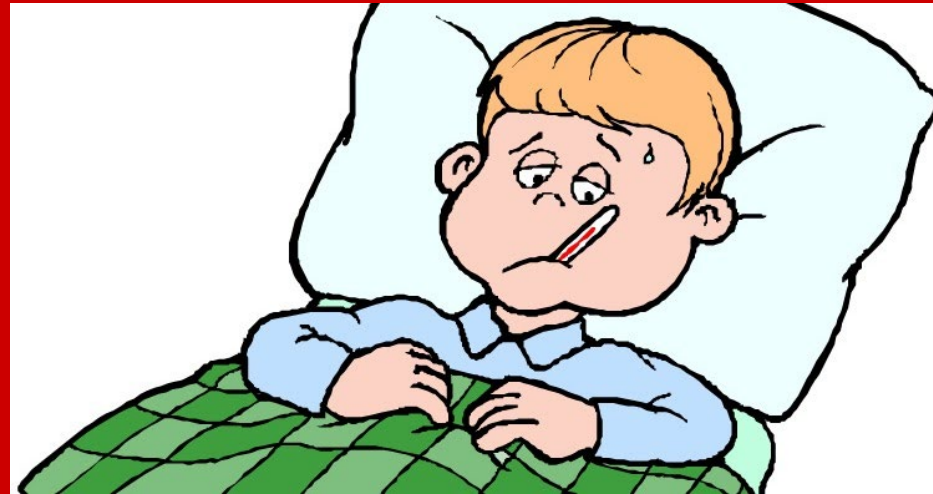
There are ways to support yourself.

(COVID-19 and Your Health, 2021)

WHAT CAN CAREGIVERS DO

Stay home if you are sick.

Do not visit family or friends who are at greater risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Use virtual communication to keep in touch to support your loved one and keep them safe.



(COVID-19 and Your Health, 2021)

If you are in crisis, get immediate help:

- Call 911
- Maryland Crisis Hotline: 1-800-422-0009
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish, or Lifeline Crisis Chat.
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522
- National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4AChild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or Online Chat
- Veteran's Crisis Line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Crisis Chat or text: 8388255
- Disaster Distress Helpline: CALL or TEXT 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish).
- The Eldercare Locator: 1-800-677-1116 – TTY

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THANK YOU!