

# Taking care of yourself

It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a pandemic. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress.

Try taking the following steps to cope with the uncertainty, changes, and social distancing measures:



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*\*Brought you by your renal social work team\**

- **Take care of your body**– Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep. Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- **Connect with others**– Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships, and build a strong support system using the phone, email, social media, and video calls.
- **Take breaks**– Relax your body often by doing things that work for you – take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or pray, or try to do activities you usually enjoy. Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
- **Stay informed**– When you feel that you are missing information, you may become more stressed or nervous. Watch, listen to, or read the news for updates from officials. Be aware that there may be rumors during a crisis, especially on social media. Always check your sources and turn to reliable sources of information like your local government authorities.
- **Avoid too much exposure to news**– Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly. Try to do enjoyable activities and return to normal life as much as possible and check for updates between breaks.
- **Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking** -consider keeping a journal where you write down things you are grateful for or that are going well.
- **Seek help when needed**– If distress impacts activities of your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, or doctor, or contact the Reach Out helpline at **519-433-2023**.