



सत्यमेव जयते

MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (Institute of National Importance)



Taking care of Mental Health of elderly during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 outbreak, all of us should take some extra time and care for ourselves. Follow some simple strategies to improve your well-being

SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY

Spending quality time with family and getting involved in family discussions, while staying at home during this period will help reduce anxiety and distress. Try to connect with your family members through phone call or video call if they stay far from you.



GETTING INVOLVED IN DAILY ACTIVITIES

Keep doing small activities at home to reduce boredom. Keeping yourself busy in the daily activities like gardening, cleaning and cooking will help reduce anxiety. If there is no other family member to help you, identify a support system to buy groceries, medicines and other essentials.



SPEND TIME ON RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

During this stressful time, it is important that you make some time for things you like. Engage in recreational activities like solving puzzles, playing some board games like carrom board or chess, listening to music, reading etc. These will help reduce boredom



CONNECTING TO LOVED ONES

During this time, you might be worried about your loved ones such as children and grandchildren, who stay away from you. Connect with them once in a while through phone calls or video call to keep the stress at bay and for any emergencies.



MAKE SOME TIME FOR EXERCISE

It is important to be physically active. Simple stretching exercises, simple yoga postures, walking indoors or meditation will be beneficial not only for your physical health but also mental health.



CUT DOWN ON LISTENING TO NEWS

With the news of the pandemic everywhere, it is difficult to filter out reliable news. Do not watch news reports all the time as it may be upsetting and misleading. Seek information from credible sources like the website of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (mohfw.gov.in). In case of doubt, ask your loved ones.



Take special care of elderly persons in your family. Remind them to practice hand washing as often as possible. Make sure to tell them to cover their mouth and nose with bent elbow, when they cough or sneeze. Watch out for any symptoms of COVID-19 and reach out for medical help, if necessary. Make sure they eat healthy food and get good sleep.

IN CASE YOU NEED ANY HELP

Please contact COVID -19 Psycho social toll free helpline at 080-46110007

or consult your doctor or a mental health professional



UNDERSTANDING GERIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS DURING COVID-19

ELDERLY ARE AT HIGHER RISK OF ACQUIRING COVID 19 BECAUSE OF THE AGING IMMUNE SYSTEM
AND PRE-EXISTING CO MORBID ILLNESS.



STAYING SOCIALLY CONNECTED

We can help the elderly cope from physical distancing by keeping in touch through virtual communication platforms. Reassure them that though they are physically distant, they are still emotionally connected.

TAKING HELP FROM OTHERS

As it is not safe for the elderly people to make frequent visits outside, it is good to seek help from others such as volunteer groups, neighbours for certain activities like getting groceries, medicines, payment of bills, etc.



ECONOMIC SUPPORT

Elderly people could be retired and living on a fixed income or pension. Reassurance by the family members about financial support will help in reducing their fear. Provision of insurance schemes/health cards would be helpful in allaying their fears.

MEDICAL SUPPORT

The family physician can play a major role in providing medical care during this situation. In case of any emergency the elderly can be provided the contact details of emergency help lines, tele consultation services and of volunteer groups that can help them



AVOID INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Elders can have increased anxiety on watching constant glorified and glamorised news about the pandemic. Instead, one can keep them keep informed about the important information and divert their time to other pleasant programs to keep them away from feeling stressed. .

SELF CARE

Elders need to focus on taking care of their body and mind. Planning a routine and eating balanced diet, exercising, taking medicines regularly, getting enough sleep and engaging with some hobbies will keep their health in a better condition.

