



COVID-19 : Let's protect our mental health too ! Seniors: Take care of yourselves

The past few weeks have been particularly difficult for seniors. Because they are more vulnerable and fragile in the face of the virus, the government has put in place strict measures to protect them such as voluntary quarantine and restriction of visits. Added to this are physical distancing measures. Many seniors are therefore isolated from the people they love, especially since their routine has been turned upside down for an unknown period. This can be a source of anxiety and distress. Here are some tips to help:



➤ Keep in touch with people around you

- Organize phone or Skype meetings with your friends and family;
- Do not hesitate to ask for help from those around you, if necessary, for grocery delivery, medications or other errands.



➤ Try to create routine adapted to the current context

- Maintain your schedule for waking up and for going to bed, eating meals, time for relaxation and taking medication;
- Try to get some exercise that is adapted and safe;
- Take advantage of the daytime if possible: go out and enjoy your backyard or a walk in your neighborhood, while respecting health and social distancing guidelines;
- Eat a balanced diet;
- Get some rest and sleep well.



➤ Add some variety to your leisure and entertainment activities

- Read or listen to books and podcasts;
- Reconnect with forgotten pastimes;
- Start a journal to write down your emotions, but also to identify your strengths that have helped you to overcome previous hardships;
- Do some crosswords;
- Listen to music and discover new music using apps (Spotify, Apple music, Deezer, Sound Cloud etc...);
- Watch a feel-good TV series or film;
- Use apps that help you connect remotely with friends for fun, for example:
 - Scrabble
 - Play cards from a distance (ex: deck of cards).



➤ **Stay informed using official/reliable sources**

- Receiving too little information, or contradictory information, can increase stress;
- Receiving too much is as bad as not enough! Try to limit the amount of Covid-19 information you get per day and make sure it comes from reliable sources.



➤ **Practice stress and anxiety management exercises**

Set aside some time in your day for relaxation or meditation exercises.

Keep an eye out for signs of distress. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness! If you feel overwhelmed, for whatever reason, if you/one of your loved ones is in distress, you can use any of the resources below:

- **Psychosocial Help Line: Info-social 811**
- **Suicide Prevention Line: 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553)**
- **Essential services directory: <http://ressortgim.ca/covid-19/> (In French)**
- **Mental Health resource Guide for the Gaspé Coast and the Magdalen Islands : https://casa-gaspe.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Mental-health-Guide_May9.pdf**

Resources

<p>To deal with anxiety better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.inspq.qc.ca/mieux-vivre • https://ecolebranchee.com/ • https://carrefour-education.qc.ca/ 	<p>For a healthy lifestyle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.dietitians.ca/News/2020/Advice-for-the-general-public-about-COVID-19?lang=fr-CA • https://www.defisante.ca/ • https://move50plus.ca/ • https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/aller-mieux-en-contexte-de-pandemie-covid-19/
<p>To manage family time better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.ecoleouverte.ca/fr/? • http://www.alloprof.qc.ca/ • https://www.teteamodeler.com/ • https://www.viedeparents.ca/ • https://naitreetgrandir.com/fr/ • https://vifamagazine.ca/ • http://www.elaborer.org/covid_enfant.pdf 	<p>Other sources of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://lepharmachien.com/covid-19-aplatir-la-courbe/ • https://www.cyberaide.ca/app/fr/ • https://jeunessejecoute.ca/ • https://www.ligneparents.com/LigneParents • https://www.teljeunes.com/Accueil • https://ampq.org/info-maladie/covid-19/ • http://www.espacesansviolence.org/gaspesielesiles

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