

H1N1 Fact Sheet

Updated: November 3, 2009

Tips for Managing Stress during a Pandemic – Adults

A flu pandemic is a stressful event. During a pandemic, you may worry about your own health and the health of those you care about. Worry, fear, anxiety and concern about the future are common and normal reactions in this kind of situation. When you go through a stressful event, it is normal to experience some of the following:

- Changes in sleep patterns and appetite
- Forgetfulness
- Less interest in daily activities
- Increased irritability and impatience

Good habits for maintaining your mental health include:

- Maintaining contact with loved ones
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Being physically active
- Managing your stress
- Drinking plenty of water to keep yourself well-hydrated
- Eating nutritious food
- Taking time out in a quiet place
- Practicing slow, measured breathing
- Using relaxation techniques

Positive coping strategies:

You should identify positive coping strategies that have previously been useful for you during illness or adversity. These strategies may be helpful in the present situation. Refer to the H1N1 Fact Sheet on 'Strategies for Building Resilience' for more suggestions.

Don't try to cope alone – ask for help from your employer, relative, friend, spiritual leader or mental health professional. If your feelings interfere with your ability to function in daily life, consider getting help.

Seek professional support when needed. For help with mental health problems, call the mental health program at your local district health authority and/or your health centre if you live in a First Nation community.