

With all the talk about **H1N1** we have learned how to look after ourselves physically...but what about our **EMOTIONS** and **STRESS** levels?



Eastern
Health



Here are some things we can do to take care of ourselves – emotionally during an outbreak of H1N1:

- Take time to rest and relax; take time for you!
- Eat well and get a good night's sleep;
- Avoid information overload on H1N1 – but get the facts;
- If you are feeling stressed, talk about your thoughts and how you are feeling with people you are close to;
- Distract yourself with activities you enjoy:
 - Get some exercise
 - Watch a movie
 - Read a book
- Avoid the use of alcohol or drugs to numb how you are feeling - consider the suggestions mentioned above instead;
- Find some comfort in your personal and spiritual beliefs;
- Try and keep a sense of humour.

Increase your “bounce back”:

- Emotional resilience is your ability to “bounce back” from difficult events.
- Certain things can increase your ability to bounce back and bring new emotional strengths. Ask yourself:

How have I handled other problems?

- Identify your strengths.
- What other crises have occurred in your life?
- How did these affect you?
- Are there other ways you might cope?

How can I foster healthy attitudes and beliefs?

- Crises and difficult circumstances are stressful but can be overcome and make us stronger.
- Focus on finding solutions and ways to improve your situation.

Professional Help

Seek professional mental health care for yourself or your loved ones if you or they experience prolonged (more than 2 weeks).

- Loss of sleep, frequent nightmares, feeling over-tired;
- Eating too much or not enough;
- Feelings of depression or anxiety that lead to a lack of interest in your usual activities;
- Drinking or using substances more than usual;
- A previously identified mental health condition recurs or becomes worse.

Source Cited: National Emergency Psychosocial Advisory Consortium, Providing Psychosocial Support: Tips for Health Care Leaders and Staff, 2009

If these circumstances occur, contact your doctor or call the Mental Health Crisis-Line at 709- 737-4668 or 1-888-737-4668