

Focus on What Needs to Happen Today

Disasters and emergencies can affect your ability to cope and make decisions. Focus on what needs to happen today.

- Make a list of what you need to do in the next day or week to keep yourself safe and comfortable.
- Break down big challenges into smaller, manageable steps.
- Return to your daily routines as much as possible. Routines like mealtimes, bedtimes, and day-to-day activities can help you feel calm and in control.
- Find a reliable source for updates and information. Take regular breaks from listening to or watching news reports. Thinking and talking about the events too much can make you feel more stressed.
- Try not to make big decisions when you are feeling stressed or upset.



Try to get quality sleep. Poor quality sleep can leave you feeling overwhelmed, which makes it harder to cope.



1-877-303-2642

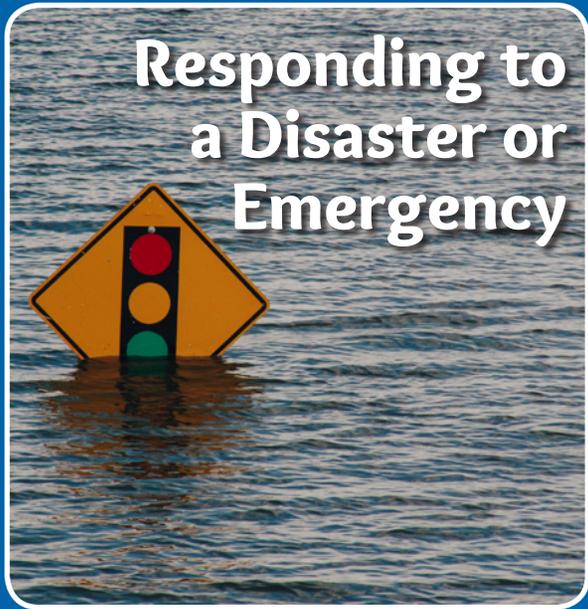
Mental Health Help Line
Mental Health Support 24/7

➤ To order this resource go to:
<https://dol.datacm.com/>
Login ID: mentalhealthresources
Password: mh2016
Item Number: DR001

Your opinion matters.
To tell us what you think of this resource go to:
<https://survey.albertahealthservices.ca/Respond>

Produced by Mental Health Promotion & Illness Prevention
email: hpdip.mh.earlyid@ahs.ca

Copyright 2020, Alberta Health Services, Mental Health Promotion & Illness Prevention. This material is protected by Canadian and other international copyright laws. All rights reserved. These materials may not be copied, published, distributed or reproduced in any way in whole or in part without the express written permission of Alberta Health Services. These materials are intended for general information only and are provided on an "as is", "where is" basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, Alberta Health Services does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information. These materials are not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health professional. Alberta Health Services expressly disclaims all liability for the use of these materials, and for any claims, actions, demands or suits arising from such use.





Experiencing disasters or emergencies can make you feel uncertain and anxious about the future. A single disaster or emergency can create a number of losses at the same time.

You may have lost your home, your feeling of safety, or people you know may be missing, injured, or have died. It can be hard to cope when you find yourself in these situations. While you cannot control a stressful situation, you can control how you **REACT** to it.

Remove yourself and your loved ones from danger. Finding shelter, water, and food is the first step in helping you cope.

Eat at regular times to give your body and brain the energy and nutrients needed to cope in stressful situations. Drink water throughout the day to stay focused. Avoid drinks with caffeine (e.g., pop, coffee, tea, energy drinks) they can make you feel anxious or restless, and affect your sleep.

Activity. Regular physical activity boosts your mood, increases your energy, improves your sleep, and helps you connect with others. Research shows that just five minutes of physical activity can be enough to make you feel less anxious and can help reduce stress.

Connect. Find ways to help others when you can and accept help from others when you need it. Helping each other builds community and reminds you that you are not alone.

Talk. Let friends and family know where you are and how you are doing.



Everyone experiences and copes with challenges differently. It's common reactions to stress in the days or weeks after a disaster or emergency.



Common reactions to a disaster or emergency:

Physical

- muscle tension
- headaches
- stomach problems

Cognitive (Thinking)

- trouble focusing, remembering, or making decisions
- questioning spirituality
- questioning life's purpose or meaning

Emotional

- anxious, scared, or angry
- sad or helpless
- guilt or shame

Behaviour

- on edge, feeling ready to explode
- trouble sleeping or staying asleep
- want to be alone