

How to Manage Holiday Stress during COVID-19

Source: [Canadian Red Cross](#)

Holidays of all sorts are upon us and it can be an exciting time for many – but it can also be challenging for many as well, especially during COVID-19.

While it can be a time for celebration, family, food and fun, it can most certainly also be a time when we feel alone, disconnected or isolated, especially while the world manages a pandemic. Some of us won't be able to get together (please follow guidelines from your local health authority.) Regardless, this year, the holidays will be different. And this will affect some of us in negative ways.

When it comes to COVID-19, information has been collected including facts, prevention tips, and resources to help you and your loved ones stay safe during the pandemic. Dealing with a pandemic is stressful enough, but with the holidays approaching the added stress can affect our sense of wellbeing and mental health.

With the pandemic, the holidays can be lonely and sad occasions for many people.

So what do you do? When you're feeling stressed, take care of yourself – taking small, positive steps can help you feel better and more in control.

How to take care of yourself:

- Understand what causes stress and recognize your own feelings
- Be patient with yourself and those close to you – it takes time to manage feelings
- Learn how to manage your reactions to these experiences
- Focus on the things you have control over

To keep your stress in check, it can also be useful to participate in activities or try relaxation techniques. Here are some examples of activities and techniques that have been proven effective:

- **Hobbies.** Discover a new pastime or take part in an activity that you enjoy.
- **Physical activity.** It has countless benefits for your health and well-being that go beyond better stress management.
- **Yoga, breathing exercises and meditation.** All these techniques are highly effective for managing stress.
- **Visualization.** Visualization techniques tap into your ability to form positive mental images.
- **Massage therapy.** Many types of massages exist, and some have a particular focus on relaxation.

It may help to:

- Maintain daily routines and do things that normally give you pleasure
- Eat healthy foods, get sleep and exercise if possible
- Accept support and assistance
- Allow yourself to feel sad and grieve
- Take small steps

Following any emergency or disaster, a person may experience a range of thoughts, feelings and behaviour that can be intense, confusing and frightening. If these reactions to stress persist beyond several weeks and make it impossible to function normally over a long period of time, seek help. One option is to contact your local health facility, or a crisis support line.

Please remember that you are not alone during this time. You can also reach out to family, friends, co-workers, your supervisor or any leaders within the organization as we are here to help. You can also speak to our EFAP provider. This service is available not just to our employees but also to their partner or family members. Please use the following information to contact our EFAP provider.

Canada:

- Call 1-877-847-4525
- Email support@resourcesforyourlife.com
- Visit <http://ca.resourcesforyourlife.com> COMPANY CODE: BMWeCare
- Download the "ICONNECT YOU" app from the App Store or Google Play PASSCODE: 149301

United States:

- Call 1-800-466-8282
- Access Code 8282
- Visit www.AlternativesEAP.com
- Download the 'Alternative EAP' app from the App Store or Google Play

If you are in a crisis, please call 911 immediately.