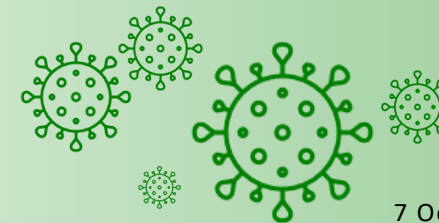




COVID CORNER

Exploring the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on our lives



7 October 2022

COVID-19 & mental health

OCTOBER IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

The importance of mental health

Mental health refers to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The state of our mental health affects how we think, feel, and act. It determines how we handle stress, relate to other people, and make healthy choices.

Mental health in South Africa

South Africa has one of the lowest mental health scores in the world. More than 1 in 3 South Africans are struggling with mental illness, but our public health service is unable to help them. Only 5% of our national health budget is spent on mental health—even though untreated mental disorders cost our country 6 times more than it would to treat them.

COVID-19 and mental health

Depression and other mental health issues have seen a major increase among South Africans since the pandemic started. Stress and anxiety have caused 65% of adults to neglect their health.

At the same time, the stigma of mental illness keeps many people from actively seeking help.

Looking after our mental health

There are things we can do to look after our mental health:

- Have a routine: get up and go to bed at the same time every day; eat regular, healthy meals; keep up with personal hygiene
- Make time for resting and for exercising
- Make sure to do things you enjoy, and keep in regular contact with people close to you. Social contact is important.
- Limit alcohol and drug use; avoid using them as a way of dealing with fear and anxiety
- Limit screen time, including social media. Use your accounts for positive and hopeful stories.
- Help others. Supporting people in your community is good for your own sense of well-being.
- If you are struggling to maintain your mental health, ask for help.

Next newsletter: The impact of Long-COVID on mental health



Fast Facts

- The COVID-19 pandemic has hugely increased depression, stress and anxiety in South Africa.
- The stigma of mental illness keeps many people from asking for help.
- We can all take steps to look after our mental health, but if you are not coping, you should look for help.
- SADAG is Africa's largest mental health organization with a 24 hour toll-free helpline: 0800 456 789

Want to find out more?

South African Depression & Anxiety Group:

<https://www.sadag.org/>

SA's mental health services statistics:

<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2019/10/15/shocking-figures-revive-calls-for-mental-health-reforms/>

COVID-19 and mental health in SA:

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/covid-19-south-africa-mental-health-impact/>

Mental Health Guide:

<https://www.mymentalhealth.guide/>

Ask Dr M

Do you still have questions?

Call us on

0800 24 36 72

or WhatsApp

082 735 4472



Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 with the two Vs:



Vaccination

Ventilation

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