

Coping with Mental Health Challenges During the Pandemic

The global pandemic, Covid-19, has had a great effect on our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Dealing with all the uncertainty and Covid- related challenges can be overwhelming, stressful, and even cause strong emotions to both adults and children.

Joblessness, having salaries slashed, caring for the sick, getting sick, schools closing, social distancing, masking, mandatory quarantine after travel, vaccination, etc. have all added up as a tremendous challenge to our mental health and thus affecting the quality of our lives.

People with diabetes are more likely to develop serious complications such as Diabetic Ketoacidosis plus Covid if they get infected with the virus. As if dealing with Diabetes is not stressful enough, now they have a mountain of other challenges. They have had to adjust to telehealth to access health services, take extra caution, and manage stress which is quite overwhelming.

Coping with mental health challenges

Mental health is a lot more than the absence of a mental disorder. People need proper housing, healthcare, employment/income security, quality relationships, positive emotions, security, and a sense of belonging to improve their overall well-being.

Whenever you do not have much choice to change a situation, learning how to cope with the stress in a healthy way will make those people you care about, those around you, and even yourself become more resilient.

So, how can we cope with Covid and Diabetic-related stresses?

1. Take care of your body.

Try as much as possible to take great care of yourself. Do not allow stress to put you down regardless. Continue taking your insulin as prescribed and see your doctor whenever you have an appointment. Also, adhere to safety measures so you do not get infected with the virus.

2. Healthy Eating.

Study shows that Covid -19 and the subsequent lockdown has led to a disruption in the eating habits. Many have resulted in snacking instead of eating healthy. Do not let the condition weigh you down. Continue being watchful of what you consume as this can help manage diabetes and prevent other possible lifestyle conditions.

3. Get Covid- 19 Vaccine.

Many people are skeptical about getting that shot. They have many questions around the vaccines available. But the Covid-19 vaccine is a great deal to your health because diabetic people are vulnerable to developing severe illness if they get coronavirus. The most effective way to prevent that from happening (as of now) is by getting vaccinated.

4. Exercising.

Exercising is the least expensive way to control your blood sugar and prevent sickness. Due to the prohibition on social gatherings, facilities like gyms are now closed. But that should not stop you. Continue with your workouts from home to enhance their immune system. You might not have all the equipment but there is a lot you can do with bodyweight. So, get that yoga mat, subscribe to that fitness program online, or just implement what you already know and see yourself hit those body goals. Exercising also reduces the body's stress levels by stimulating endorphins.

5. Watch your blood glucose.

Despite the current worldwide condition, continuous blood glucose monitoring is important as to avoid other risks that might come by.

6. Connect with Others.

Social networking is very much important for diabetics. Due to the lockdown, it might seem hard to maintain this but thanks to the technology, we can call, text, video call those we love, and join online events organized by our communities.

Through this, we can get rid of the loneliness feeling and continue drawing strength as we used to before the pandemic.

7. Take breaks from reading, watching, or listening to news stories.

It is good to be informed but hearing about the pandemic now and then can be disturbing, breaks are much helpful. You might also be bored and result in being addicted to screens and phones. Consider limiting yourself from such. Trust me, it is worth it.

8. Be Positive.

Have a sense of gratitude for what is going well in life. Adjust how you think, be optimistic and focus on the good in any situation. Approach life with the expectation that things will go well. This will improve the quality of your life.

9. Learn how to deal with stress.

Stress is unavoidable. High stress resulting from losing a loved one, losing your job, caring for the sick, homelessness, managing a health condition, etc, can easily land you into depression. Learn some stress management skills like relaxing and meditating over yoga, sleeping, listening to music, laughing with people, critical thinking, and whatever works for you to help relieve stress.

10. Get Professional Help.

If you have implemented all the above and you are still struggling to cope with the situation, reach out to your doctor or psychologist, schedule sessions, and then talk things out with them. They will guide you and help figure out the best way to help you.

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