Coping Strategies for Health Care Workers Working With Refugees and Other Displaced Persons

University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Medicine Center for Global Health
Who Are We

Bringing the expertise of Illinois to the world, and a world of expertise to Illinois
Thank You!
Goals

- Recognizing Stress
- Coping with Stress
  - Managing Stress for Individuals
  - Managing Stress for Families

Series of 2 webinars
Recognizing Stress
Overview

Mental or emotional strain during adverse or challenging circumstances

Each person’s response to stress is individual
Signs of Stress in Adults

- Pupils dilate
- Light Headedness and Dizziness
- Shoulder and Neck muscles tense
- Mouth goes dry
- Blood pressure rises
- Heart beats quickly and breathing is fast and shallow
- Nausea
- Adrenaline is produced
- Sweating
- Bladder Weakness
- Increased blood flow to hands and legs and reduced blood flow to the digestive system
- Trembling
Signs of Stress In Adults

- Weight loss or gain
- Pain
- Feeling tired
- Sleeping problems
Signs of Stress In Adults

- Concentration
- Memory
- Social Withdrawal
- Communication
Pay attention to yourself and your reactions. That is one way to recognize what feeling stressed looks like for you.
Managing Stress For Individuals
Coping mechanisms enable us to adjust to stressful events and at the same time maintain emotional wellbeing.
Overview

- Actively relax muscles
- Use positive self-talk
- Be active, exercise, go for a walk
- Music and art
Overview – ctd

- Write
- Find a Community
- Religious or Spiritual Activity
- Sleep well
Managing Stress for Individuals: Reducing Misinformation
Reducing misinformation and increasing sense of safety

- Limit time on social media
- Less focus on any media
- Manage stress soon
- Reducing lack of control
Managing Stress for Individuals: Slow Breathing
Slow breathing
Managing Stress For Families
Managing Stress for Families: Preparedness
Preparedness for Your Family

- Active coping skill ➔ making a plan
- Who needs to be included in your plan?
- Meet
- Discuss range of scenarios
- Brainstorm
- Make an action plan
Talk about how Covid-19 is transmitted

- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Stay at home when sick
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue
- Clean frequently touched surfaces
- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer
Preparedness for Your Family - ctd

- Choose a room for isolation
- Make a plan for those at higher risk of transmission:
  - older adults and those with underlying chronic medical
Preparedness for Your Family - ctd

- Create an emergency contact list
- Identify aid organizations in your community
- Talk with your neighbors about emergency planning
Preparedness for Your Family - ctd

Making a supply kit for 3-5 days

- Water, food, dry food, fluids with electrolytes
- Regular medications, equipment
- Medicines for fever: acetaminophen (paracetamol) or ibuprofen; anti-diarrheal medication
- Hygiene supplies
- General supplies: flashlight (torch) and batteries, portable radio, and garbage bags
Thank you for listening!

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