
Concerning COVID-19COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020-2023

10-19-2020

Mental Health Concerns

Cedarville University

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CONCERNING COVID: MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

 [Caring Well, Staying Well](#)

October 19, 2020 |



October 23, 2020

Question: Why are mental health concerns such a significant part of this COVID-19 pandemic, and what can we do to maintain our mental health during this time?

Answer:

Lean into the Lord during times of trouble and uncertainty so that He can give you rest and peace about the uncertainties of this world.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

Studies show that COVID-19 has caused increased mental health strain. This mental strain has been identified as being related to stress and anxiety surrounding daily life activities and functions. Many common mental health strain issues can be related to stress. Some common concerns in regards to mental health strain include:

- COVID regulations
- Quarantine and isolation
- Uncertainty and upheaval in daily routines
- Political and civil unrest

All of these concerns may lead to increased anxiety, depression, distress, substance use, and suicidal thoughts.

But Where Is Our Hope?

Although this is a time of uncertainty and worry, it is not new to God, as believers there is HOPE given to us through Scripture. “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you, he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” (Deut. 31:8). The Israelites went through times of uncertainty while wandering in the wilderness for over 40 years, but God provided for them in all things, never leaving them on their own. “Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess for he who is promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23).

So, What Can We Do?

There are some things we can do regularly to take care our mental health and focus on what is important:

- Spend time in the Word and in prayer
- Take a break from media
- Filter essential information from news and social media
- Take care of your body
 - Eat healthy
 - Exercise
 - Get enough sleep
 - Take a deep breath
- Keep a daily routine
- Go outside
- Find hobbies that you may enjoy
- Stay involved in church and community (work within COVID guidelines)
- Keep in touch with friends and family
 - Social media
 - Zoom
 - Facetime
 - Texting and calling

You can probably find others that work for you. The important thing is to take time out of the day to focus on what is joy producing and being thankful for good things (Mayo Clinic, 2020). “Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the mind and healing to the body” (Prov. 16:24).

When to Seek Help

When individual coping mechanisms are ineffective, mental distress can occur. Here are some signs and symptoms of mental distress:

- Feelings of feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration
- Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

If you are experiencing these symptoms for multiple days and it is affecting your daily activities PLEASE SEEK HELP!!

Per CDC recommendations, here are some numbers to call:

- 911
- Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or Online Chat
- SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889 (to find a mental healthcare provider)

Cedarville-specific help:

University Medical Services: 937-766-7862 or email ums@cedarville.edu

Counseling Services: 937-766-7855 or email counseling@cedarville.edu

Campus Security 937-766-7992 or email safety@cedarville.edu

Research:

Studies show since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic there has been **increasing anxiety and fear among American college students** (Perez et al., 2020). Cross sectional studies and surveys have found, “overall student life became **more stressful and unpredictable**” (Perez et al., 2020).

According to the CDC website, the population at large will feel “**fear and anxiety about a new disease** and what could happen, which can be **overwhelming and cause strong emotions**.” Also, the CDC states that people who are “and can have increased stress and anxiety,” therefore, some mental strain (CDC, 2020). According to a study conducted by Dartmouth University following trends in college student mental health, they “observed a large-scale shift in mental health and behavior compared to the observed baseline established for this group over previous years.” Also, in direct regards to COVID, “According to the study, anxiety and depression, ... levels remained consistently higher than similar periods during previous academic terms.” Unfortunately, these strong emotions have led to an overall **40% increase in mental health concerns and substance use** in North American adults. Specifically, a 13% increase in substance use and an 11% **increase of serious consideration of suicide** (CDC, 2020).

Sources:

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

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Becka Wagner says:

[October 27, 2020 at 11:43 am](#)

Well done!! So proud of these senior nursing students!!

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