

# COVID-19

## RESILIENCE OF BURN SURVIVORS

### Support self-efficacy

COVID-19 bears resemblance to burn recovery: coping with fear, living through uncertainty, and feeling as if you have lost control in your life. As a burn survivor, you know how this goes. You know how to regain self-confidence, control and willpower by putting forth necessary efforts, one step at a time.

Thinking it might be a difficult period to get bandages and dressings for your wounds or access to specialized care? Don't hesitate to ask for help. Remember that each problem has its own solution. Your burn team will help find a way to get you the help you need.

Keep in mind that you are also participating in an unprecedented collective effort striving for the well-being of us all.

### Advice for better coping during the pandemic



**The coronavirus outbreak is frightening and stressful for many people. You may be just as affected as others, however as a burn survivor, your experience may make you more resilient than you think. Here is some advice to promote your well-being.**

### Promote sense of safety

Multiple factors influence the risk of contracting the virus. Sanitary measures such as washing your hands and social distancing are very effective strategies to limit viral spread and protect yourself.

We have access to a great wealth of information. Some sources are better than others. Listen to trustworthy sources. Be cautious of sources that say things that are different from what your local health authority says. Burn care professionals can also answer your questions.

If you must attend a medical appointment, rest assured you are in a safe and highly monitored environment. If you are worried about your health and access to a health professional seems complicated, please reach out to your burn care team.

## Create calm

It is quite normal to go through intense and variable emotional states right now. You might be struggling with memories of the infections you were fighting or feelings of loneliness while you were hospitalized after your burn injuries. These are normal emotions and will fade with time.

We are bombarded with COVID-19 news coverage. Limit that media binge-watching, especially if it increases your level of anxiety. Turn that television off!

Remember when burn care professionals said to take things one day at a time? Well with the pandemic, this is pretty much the same. We will get through this, slowly but surely. You know how this goes having been through it before.

Those same burn professionals told you that a daily routine was of the utmost importance for your recovery. Good sleeping habits, regular healthy meals, keeping up with household chores and daily exercise. Guess what? You are also equipped with experience in this to face these hard times. In addition to being the best protection for everyone, staying at home can be reassuring and comforting.

Take time to do things you love. Relax by watching a movie, playing a game, listening to music, dancing, taking a bath, or all of the above! Heck, why not clean those laundry drawers you never have time to do.

Alcohol, tobacco and cannabis may help you unwind in these stressful times. Use these with moderation. Remember, one too many might leave you feeling worse than you did before.

## Reinforce connectedness

Talk to someone every day. Plan a chat with your loved ones by phone, video or social media.

Take time to rekindle with old friends and ask your distant relatives how they're doing.

If you are feeling alone, don't hesitate to ask your neighbors, healthcare professionals, community-based organizations or your local burn survivor organizations for support.

## Foster hope

Even though coronavirus cases may still be on the rise, maintain a healthy balance in your perspective and recognize the encouraging developments as well. Life has changed dramatically in a short period of time, try to appreciate the opportunities that come along with this new experience.

Without denying the risks and dangers of the outbreak, let's cultivate optimism and hope.

Remember that the COVID-19 pandemic will be over one day!

As a burn survivor, you know all too well what is living with fear, facing the unknown, overcoming great hardships, questioning life priorities and... combatting infectious diseases.

You obviously do not want to relive this struggle, but our community is counting on you and your experience to get through this. Thank you for helping us.

