



## **For Healthcare Workers and First Responders**

Responding to the COVID-19 crisis can take an emotional toll on you. You are likely facing your own feelings of uncertainty while also working long hours with limited resources. As Healthcare Workers and First Responders, you are being asked to care for others while also managing your own intense emotional responses to this crisis.

***Be sure to take care of yourself as you work to take care of others.***

### **Develop a Self-Care Plan:**

- Develop a “buddy system” with coworkers and monitor one another’s level of functioning, fatigue level, and stress symptoms
- Set up times to check-in with members of your team
- Seek social support from coworkers, family, and friends
- When possible, limit the length of your shifts and be sure to take breaks away from your work area
- Ensure you prioritize time to rest and get adequate sleep
- Stay hydrated and maintain a healthy diet and regular eating schedule (eat a small amount at regular intervals even if you are not hungry—the adrenaline of crisis work may lead to loss of appetite)
- Engage in activities you enjoy when not working, such as reading, exercising, or cooking
- Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation

### **Check in with yourself:**

Be on the lookout for these symptoms of burnout:

- Sadness or apathy
- Irritability or agitation
- Feelings of isolation
- Emotional exhaustion
- Cynicism
- Reduced sense of accomplishment or that nothing you do can help

Also, check in with yourself for symptoms of Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS):

- Physical symptoms of stress (rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling)
- Feeling hypervigilant or easily startled
- Vivid dreams of situations related to the crisis
- Feelings of guilt, anger, or hopelessness

**Check in with yourself and your coworkers often and reach out to a mental healthcare provider for additional support, if needed. Also, be on the lookout for additional resources and information from Inspire Wellness to help you navigate these uncertain times. Remember, you do not have to face this crisis on your own.**

***Our community thanks you for your tireless efforts to keep us safe and healthy!***

Please know that we are here to support you (201-564-7331).