

**A DISTURBING EVENT
HAS OCCURRED**

**AND THIS EVENT
COULD TAKE ITS TOLL...**

■ After a stressful event, a person might:

- Experience fear, uncertainty, anxiety, sadness;
- Find it difficult to focus or to make decisions;
- Experience fatigue, apathy, have less concentration and a reduced attention span;
- Lose appetite and suffer insomnia;
- See an increase in pre-existing health issues;
- Become isolated or, on the contrary, feel the need to be surrounded with people;
- Be uncertain what to do or how to overcome the challenge;
- Consume more alcohol, drugs or medication than usual;
- Find it difficult to manage at work or at school;
- Experience tensions or get into conflicts with people in their environment;
- Find it challenging to assume parental responsibilities;
- Experience anger and display aggressive outbursts;
- Relive various moments of the event or have flash-backs;
- Feel the need to recount the event periodically;
- Have suicidal thoughts.

We should keep in mind that such reactions are normal in the face of an event which is anything but normal.

We may not have control over the event itself but we must learn to compose with a new reality which calls upon our adaptive abilities. It is important to pay attention to these signs of stress which can occur immediately in the aftermath of the event or several weeks to several months later.

■ Several methods to manage stress

There are things you can do to manage the stress and to feel better. Multiple strategies exist, several of which are quite accessible and easy to implement as part of your daily routine.



Take care of yourself during the unusually stressful period:

- Reduce your exposure to the news (television, radio, newspapers). Live in the moment and avoid dreading the future.
- Pay attention to your feelings and reactions, allow yourself to voice them out to a person you trust or find an alternate way to express them (writing, reading, physical activity).
- Adopt or maintain a healthy lifestyle (sleep well, eat well, adopt new living habits).
- Respect your limits (say no if there is something you do not want to do).
- Surround yourself with people that make you feel good.
- Identify one or two people you can reach out to in case of need.
- Help one another (discussions, support, encouragement).
- Avoid making important decisions.
- Remember ways or strategies that helped you get through difficult situations in the past.
- Limit your consumption of alcohol or drugs.
- Spend time with family and seek the company of relatives and friends.
- Take some time to really listen and to talk about the event and what you are going through.
- Participate in relaxing family activities.

■ Signs of improvement

- The event comes to mind less and less frequently.
- The event and its consequences begin to feel manageable and surmountable.
- You begin to feel progressively better (emotions become easier to handle).
- You progressively resume the course of regular daily activities.
- You begin to smile or to have fun again.
- You eat and sleep well.

Other positive reactions

- The desire to take charge of the situation.
- Discovering new abilities and being proud of making it through.
- Reinforced family bonds.
- Increased solidarity and mutual support.
- Strengthened social bonds.
- Tightened bonds with those around you.
- Greater tolerance to stress and improved adaptability.

Need some help?

Some people may feel overwhelmed or unable to deal with the situation. Is this the case for you or for someone you know? Don't hesitate to reach out to a professional **and call**:



Dial 811 to contact Info-Santé and Info-Social.

These services are free and confidential.

Here are additional resources for more information:

- Website of the Ministère de la Sécurité publique :
<https://www.securitepublique.gouv.qc.ca/accueil.html>
- Website of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
<https://www.canada.ca/fr/agence-inspection-aliments.html>
- Website of the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ)
www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca
- Website of the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec (MFFP)
<https://mffp.gouv.qc.ca>