

It's important to

When to seek help?

Taking Care of Our Health and Wellbeing Following a Natural Disaster

- Spend time with family and friends
- Try to get back to a routine
- Continue a healthy lifestyle (eating, sleeping, exercise)
- Take time out but don't isolate yourself
- Write down your worries and concerns
- Express your feelings in your own time and way
- Accept help when it is offered
- Limit the amount of media coverage you are exposed to
- Don't expect to have all the answers
- Understand you are not alone in your experience

Professional assistance is recommended when

- The level of distress feels extreme
- The emotional reactions are lasting too long (>4 weeks)
- The distress interferes with the ability to participate in day to day activities
- Withdrawal from usual relationships
- Feeling overwhelming fear for no apparent reason
- Panic symptoms
- Avoiding things that bring back memories to the point that day to day activities cannot be carried out
- Excessive guilt
- Loss of interest in the future
- Thoughts of self harm or suicide



Where you can find help

- ⇒ **General Practitioners**
- ⇒ **A range of specialised mental health clinicians and services** (referral via GP): psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, mental health nurse...
- ⇒ **Online counselling and information services**
 - Beyond Blue: www.beyondblue.org
 - Centre for Post-traumatic Mental Health: phoenixaustralia.org/
 - Red Cross: www.redcross.org.au/
 - Australian Government Disaster Assist: www.disasterassist.gov.au
 - Rural Adversity Mental Health Program: www.ramhp.com.au
- ⇒ **Telephone support services**
 - NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511
 - Lifeline Crisis Support: 13 11 14
 - Drug & Alcohol Helpline: 1300 887 000
 - MensLine: 1300 78 99 78
 - Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- ⇒ **Emergency Services** (if person or others in danger): 000
 - State Emergency Service (SES): 132 500

Things to try and avoid

- Using alcohol or other substances to cope
- Working too much
- Engaging in stressful situations
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Avoiding pleasurable activities
- Talking about what happened if you are not ready
- Taking risks or making major life decisions

