



Coping with Serious or Chronic Conditions

OCTOBER 2016

FEATURED ARTICLE:

Coping Strategies: When You or Your Child has a Chronic Condition

Handling the day to day challenges of a chronic illness can be overwhelming. Often those affected with chronic medical conditions struggle with feelings of anger, hopelessness, or devastating sadness. Loved ones may also find the situation difficult and emotionally ache with similar symptoms.

YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH OR ARE COPING WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS
Usually, the first reaction is why is this happening to me? Or, what did I do to cause or deserve this? Being diagnosed with a chronic condition is scary, and sometimes you had nothing to do with the cause – it could be genetic or you may have been exposed to something that caused the illness. You may go through a plethora of emotions from anger, sadness, confusion, stress, embarrassment, and fear to depression. All of this is normal.

Not only do you need to work with your doctors on the best course for your health, you also need to invest time in supporting yourself. Here are some suggestions:

- Educate yourself on your condition. Knowledge is power. Learn how to live your best life possible with your condition. If you have questions, make sure you log them and bring them to your next doctor's appointment. Your doctor is the expert on the condition, but you are the expert on yourself and what is going on with you.
- Research and implement lifestyle changes that will improve your health. Your life and habits may need to change. You may not be able to control your disease, but you can control your diet and exercise.
- Be sure to learn and incorporate into your lifestyle evidence based guidelines for managing your chronic illness (for example, if you have diabetes be sure to schedule foot and eye exams every year).

CONTINUED

FREE WEBINAR:

**Protecting Our Precious Lives:
Cancer Awareness**

October 18th

12-1pm and 3-4pm EST
11-12pm and 2-3pm CST
10-11am and 1-3pm MST
9-10am and 12-1pm PST

This webinar examines the steps we each have to take toward becoming healthier, with a focus on prevention as the ultimate goal. We'll round out the session with a discussion of breast, ovarian, prostate and other cancer risk factors to consider; self-care strategies; and what we can do to empower ourselves to make positive lifestyle choices.

TO REGISTER: Click on the time you would like to attend above.

Or log on to www.HelloE4.com with your username and password. Click on "UPCOMING WEBINARS" on the homepage and follow the easy instructions



CONTINUED

- Be patient with yourself. Give yourself time to accept the diagnosis, make changes, and embrace the “new you.”
- Find ways to decrease your stress, ex. walking the dog, scheduling a set lunch with a friend every week, or reading a book. If you are overwhelmed, you may need to temporarily or permanently drop some obligations. Do what you can to lighten your load right now.
- If you are still struggling, reach out for help. Surround yourself with compassionate people. Find a support group or call E4 Health.

MY CHILD HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS

You and your child are probably going through the complete range of emotions. You may even be angry with your spouse, the doctors, or the entire world. That is understandable.

- Tackle the condition head-on. Research and educate yourself on your child’s condition and share age appropriate information with our child. Kids pick up on more than you think from conversations.
- Try to manage your stress so you won’t increase our child’s stress. Stress is contagious that way, and your response will influence your child’s reactions.
- Talk to your child about their feelings and let them ask questions. Their concerns and fears may be completely different from yours. Help your child, as age appropriately as they can, learn how to answer questions about their condition if you aren’t around, for example at school.
- If you have other children, make time for them. They are probably scared and confused too, or may even feel guilty. In all the chaos, be sure to have some one-on-one time with them.
- Find your support team. Your child, you, and other family members will need a strong support system. Reach out to support groups for your child’s illness as others who have been down this path may be able to help you. Contact a counselor through E4 Health to help your family through this difficult time.

THIS MONTH, LET US BE YOUR RESOURCE FOR:

- Professional counseling to help manage emotional wellbeing, stress, anxiety, uncertainty, and grief
- Online learning via our webinar, “Protecting Our Precious Lives: Cancer Awareness” on Tuesday, October 18th
- Consultations with qualified professionals to help navigate the financial and legal aspects of long-term medical care
- Articles and tips on a range of topics related to care management, care giving, and chronic conditions

ALWAYS AVAILABLE
ALWAYS CONFIDENTIAL

For whatever work or life issue is on your mind, or for anything related to daily living that you could use some extra help with, let E4 Health be your resource. It’s free, it’s confidential, and it’s available to you, as well as your family and household members. Just call or log on to get started.

800-828-6025

www.HelloE4.com

Not sure what your username
and password is?

Email us today!

eap@e4healthcare.com

SOURCES: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/chronic-illness.aspx>,
<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000601.htm>,
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chronic/Pages/Siblings-of-Children-with-Chronic-Illnesses.aspx>