

## **SOCIAL MEDIA STRESS**

We are regularly flooded with online notifications. Social media can provide a sense of being connected with our loved ones, or aware of current events, it can also be stressful.

Social media stress is a growing problem. It is so ubiquitous and insidious that most people do not easily realize the stress caused by their social media engagement or how the magnitude of the problem.

Constantly hearing or seeing bad news, as well as being "on call" to every notification that you receive uses a lot of energy. Comparing your life to the fantasy lives depicted in social media can also be extremely anxiety-producing.

### **Prevalence and Occurrence**

As of 2019, 94% of Canadians had at least one social media account. In a study done in 2018, one-fifth of the social media users reported losing sleep (19%), getting less physical activity (22%), or having trouble concentrating on tasks (18%) due to their social media use. One-eighth of users also reported feeling anxious, depressed, frustrated, or jealous of other people's lives they saw online.

### **Indicators of Social Media Stress**

- Low self-esteem during or after use.
- Comparing yourself negatively or being envious of others.
- Decrease in concentration or sleep disturbances.
- Feeling fatigued or stressed after social media use.
- Worsening of anxiety or depression symptoms.

### **Treatments that Work**

#### **Psychoeducation**

Research suggests that it might be helpful to teach people ways to adapt to new communication channels and familiarize them with the associated risks.

#### **Self-help**

- Whenever possible, reach out to family and friends in person.
- Start focusing on your physical health. Exercising, or meditating can help uplift your mood.
- Learning a new skill or rediscovering an old hobby can help too.
- Getting proper sleep is helpful for psychological well-being.
- Detox from social media use for some time by logging out and uninstalling some apps that seem to be affecting your psychological health.
- Set firm boundaries for yourself on the amount of time you spend on social media and try to be accountable.
- Get support from mental health professionals.

**Resources** – [Social Media and Mental Health](#), HelpGuide.org

**References** –Statistics Canada: [Canadians' assessments of social media in their lives](#)

Homewood Heath, University of Calgary: [The Dangers of social media on your Mental Health.](#)