

SOCIAL MEDIA STRESS

In today's digital age, we are flooded with notifications almost all the time. Although social media gives us a sense of being connected with our loved ones, it also has cons.

Social media stress is a new and growing problem. It's so ubiquitous and insidious that most people don't even realize they're stressed until they're almost falling apart - and then they still don't connect the dots around social media being a large part of the problem.

When you're constantly hearing or seeing bad news, as well as being "on call" to every buzz you hear, this uses much energy a little at a time. Comparing your life to the fantasy lives depicted in social media is also extremely anxiety-producing. Psychology can help reduce this stress.

Prevalence and Occurrence

In Canada, as of 2019, 94% of people have 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. In a study done in 2021, around 20% of social media users under age 30 reported feeling anxious or depressed because of their social media use compared with 12% of those aged 35 to 49.

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 in uplifting 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.](#)