

NEWS RELEASE
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For immediate release

When Overwhelmed by Farm Stress – There is Help

Sunrise Health Region wishes to remind farm families of the warning signs of stress and that the health region has resources to assist when the stress of farming threatens your health.

Throughout the Sunrise Health Region, farmers and other agricultural businesses are being faced with challenging times and the recent wet weather adds to worry. Sometimes the day-to-day pressures in the agricultural sector can make it difficult to cope and day-to-day stress can put great pressure on the individual and the family.

Anxiety and long hours can lead to farm injuries. Rest whenever possible. Remind yourself and your family members each day to pause and consider actions that could lead to injury, such as reaching to untangle a piece of equipment or moving equipment around other people or under power lines.

The stressors of farming include weather, poor crops and prices, pressure to keep up with the latest technology and worries of failure or of what others may think.

Many people experience feelings of isolation, loneliness, sadness, emotional distress or a feeling of disconnection when facing these stressors. These feelings are normal reactions to difficult situations and are usually short term. People learn to cope with these feelings just as we learn to cope with other difficult situations that we may encounter, but sometimes we surpass our ability to cope with stress.

Some warning signs that stress may be beyond our normal ability to cope include: increased heart rate, rapid breathing, tense muscles, heightened blood pressure, sleep and appetite problems, irritability, increased use of substances and a lack of concentration. If someone does not seek help, they are at risk of depression. Most people with depression can be successfully treated.

It is important to realize that depression is an illness, not a weakness of character.

There are many healthy ways to deal with stress including:

- Sharing your situation openly and honestly with family members. Ignoring the problems or hiding your feelings is unhealthy. Ask for help from family members, friends or neighbours.
- Accepting that some things cannot be changed. Learn to distinguish between things you can and cannot control.
- Eat right, exercise and try to get enough sleep.
- Don't use alcohol or other substances to deal with problems. This can lead to other problems in your life.

If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms:

- Talk to your family doctor.
- Contact Sunrise Health Region Mental Health Services at 786-0558. There are rural mental health clinics through the Sunrise Health Region in Canora, Kamsack, Preeceville, Foam Lake, Ituna, Melville, Esterhazy and Yorkton.
- The Ministry of Agriculture has a Farm Stress Line that can be accessed at 1-800-667-4442.
- All services are confidential.

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For more information, please contact:

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