



## **Personal Care and Stress Management**

This pandemic has been highlighting the importance of mental health in professionals engaged in the different overwhelming challenges they nowadays deal while coping with COVID 19 outbreak. Their increased vulnerability is also related to the extensive media coverage, which amplifies fear and uncertainty, especially as there is no vaccine or definitive treatment so far.

Many gastroenterologists, beyond being faced with unpredictable new needs such as limiting GI specific care, entire reorganization of their schedules and patient management rules - either in Endoscopy Units or outpatient clinics - have also been reassigned, in multiple occasions, to unexpected tasks. Some (young faculty members mainly) with recent ICU or critical care experience, are being additionally trained for ICU care, and backfill positions previously under internal medicine management. GI trainees and specialists have been redeployed to Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease wards.

Though adequate training on infection control for staff, with clear protocols to follow, might mitigate and facilitate an adaptive stress response, the role of a both supportive and communicative supervisor/leader must be emphasized. Burn out is as importantly to be prevented as to be readily identified so that timely intervention can be provided. Leveraging your medical staff to the top of their competences and humanity will be a rewarding experience for everyone involved and promote a safety culture environment.

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