



INTERNATIONAL: The Effects of COVID-19 on the Mental Health of Indigenous Communities

July 17, 2020

News Type: Weekly Spark, Weekly Spark News

[Medical News Today](#) [1]

Indigenous communities are being disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from the U.S. and Canada show Native communities have higher rates of severe illness and death than the general population. The pandemic also may be having an outsized mental health impact, with data from Canada showing increased mental health concerns among some First Nations people. According to experts, COVID-19 has worsened pre-existing disparities linked to factors such as intergenerational trauma and limited access to resources. In response, indigenous leaders and organizations are offering coping strategies, such as staying connected with family and friends through phone or video. The Native Wellness Institute in Oregon is hosting a virtual [Power Hour](#) [2], a forum for storytelling, comedy, and workshops. At the national level, the National Indian Health Board's [COVID-19 Tribal Resource Center](#) [3] and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [COVID-19 Tribal Communities webpage](#) [4] offer relevant tools and guidance. Glorinda Segay of the Navajo Department of Health recommends exercising self-compassion. "People need to consider being more gentle with themselves through reassurance and prayers and forgive themselves for making mistakes while adjusting to the new norm."

Spark Extra! Watch our [SPARK Talk](#) [5] on preventing suicide in Native communities.

Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/the-effects-of-covid-19-on-the-mental-health-of-indigenous-communities>

[2] <https://www.facebook.com/NativeWellnessInstitute>

[3] <https://www.nihb.org/covid-19/>

[4] <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/tribal/index.html>

[5] <http://www.sprc.org/video/native-americans>

Printed on 12/04/2020 from <https://sprc.org/news/international-effects-covid-19-mental-health-indigenous-communities>