

## LET US LIVE LIKE WE'RE STILL AT LOCKDOWN LEVEL 5 SAYS KZN HEALTH MEC



**The feared, stronger and potentially deadlier second wave of COVID -19 infections could be prevented if citizens of KwaZulu-Natal conduct themselves as though they were still under the stricter Level 5 of the national lockdown.**

This is according to KZN Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu, who has also expressed her concerns about the apparent reintroduction of various forms of risky public behaviour since the country was de-escalated to Level 1.

These include rampant partying and alcohol consumption, failure to wear face masks and adhere to social distancing, as well as the smoking of the "Hubbly-bubbly", also known as the "hookah", which is shared by groups of people and contains harmful substances, exposing users to potential COVID-19 infection through saliva.

The MEC is also worried about asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19 interacting closely with the elderly, which could prove fatal. Countries such as Spain, Italy, South Korea, China, United States, and the United

Kingdom, which were hardest hit by the first wave of COVID – 19, - have begun seeing a resurgence of the virus in many communities. For now, South Africa's own rate of infections has been on a downward spiral, with a recovery rate of 89.9%.

Nevertheless, MEC Simelane-Zulu says this is no time to be complacent. From the country's cumulative 669 498 COVID-19 infections and 16 376 deaths, KwaZulu-Natal has had a total of 118 350 cases, of which 6740 are still active, with 108 993 (or 92%) recoveries. At least 175 new cases have been registered in the province in the past 24 hours. Sadly, the province has registered a total of 2617 deaths due to the virus.

Speaking during an interview on her Department's new innovative and interactive multimedia programme LunchtimeChat.Gov, MEC Simelane-Zulu said: "We are pleading with citizens to co-operate with us, because if they don't, we will find ourselves being hit by this second wave.

The biggest challenge is that no-one knows the extent to which that second wave could affect us, though what is clear is that it is definitely stronger than

the first wave. We appeal to fellow compatriots to wash their hands regularly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer, wear face masks, and practice social distancing."

"It is much better and safer to stay home as much as possible, and only visit elderly people when it's absolutely necessary. This is important because sometimes younger people may be infected but asymptomatic. This does not, however, stop them from passing the virus onto the elderly, who may become sick or even die.

What we are seeing at restaurants, pubs, and nightclubs is extremely concerning. You'd swear it was business as usual. There's also this trend of smoking something called 'hubbly-bubbly', which is one of the quickest ways to transmit COVID – 19. It may sound light-hearted, but the truth is that we all have a responsibility to take care of our own lives. Yes, Government is there, but in many respects, making a difference is in our own hands.

Government cannot take a mask and put it on a person. We cannot police people in everything that they do at all times. That is why as

communities, we must take that responsibility... That is why we are pleased that the MEC for Transport, Mr Bheki Ntuli, is in talks with the taxi industry to find ways to ensure that the proper precautions, including the wearing of masks by commuters, are followed.






"The very same way that when we had the HIV/AIDS pandemic individuals had to ensure that they had condoms so that they could protect themselves. Government made condoms freely available, but using them is up to individuals. What we are saying with masks is the same. People need to wear their masks at all times in order to stay safe from COVID - 19. This is about our own safety.

We need to get into the habit of living as though we were still in level 5 of the lockdown, even though we are at Level 1. This way we'll be able to prevent the threat of a second wave of infections. Notably, the MEC also announced that the Department would be resuming a number of its highly effective community outreach programmes as the Province forges ahead to reduce the burden of disease.

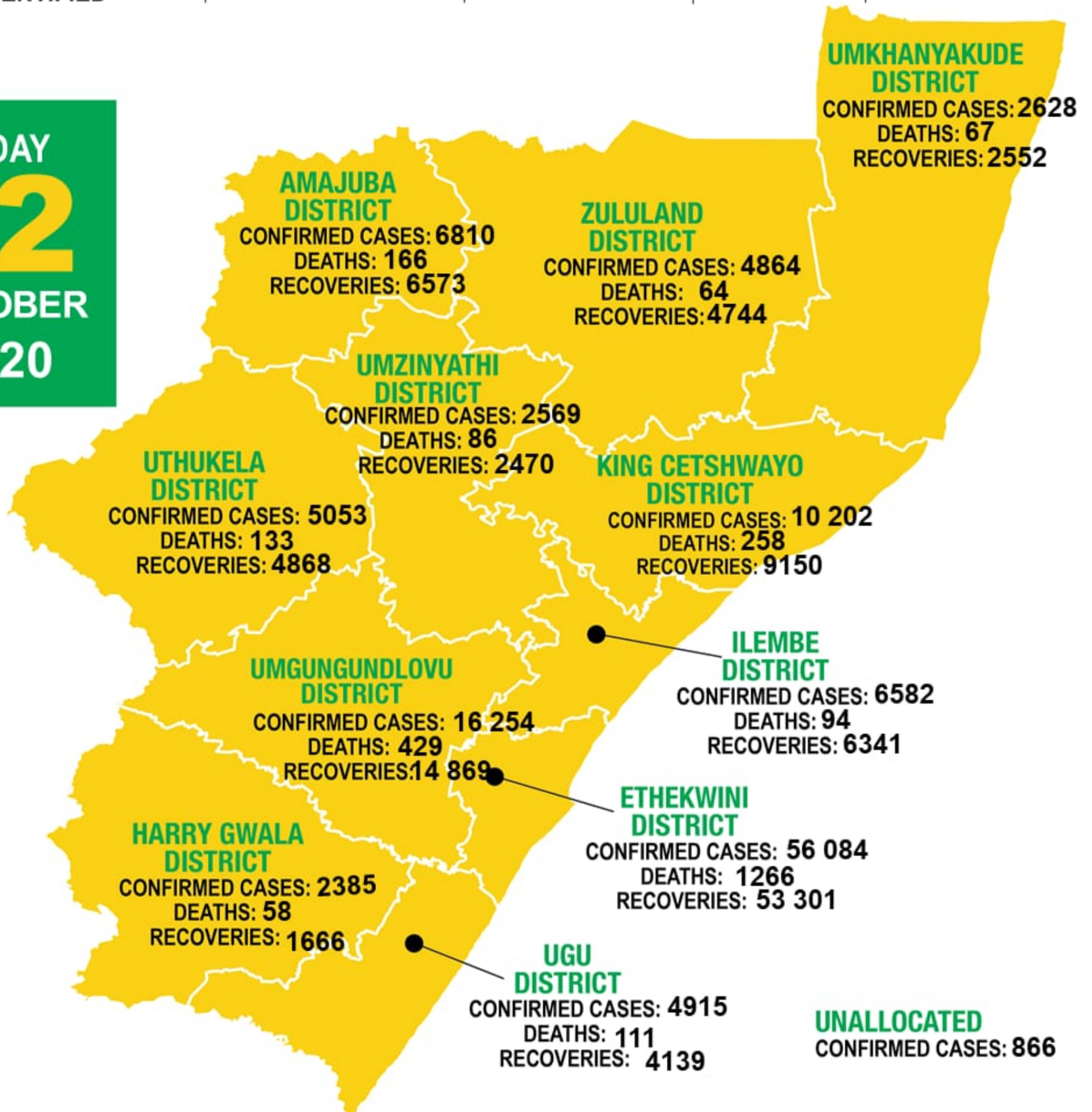
This will be done in keeping with the stipulated regulations on public gatherings.

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# COVID-19 STATISTICS IN **KZN**

				
<b>119 212</b>	<b>5807</b>	<b>110673</b>	<b>2732</b>	<b>140</b>
POSITIVE CASES IDENTIFIED	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERIES	DEATHS	NEW CASES

FRIDAY  
**02**  
OCTOBER  
2020



Learn more to Be READY for #COVID19:  
[www.sacoronavirus.co.za](http://www.sacoronavirus.co.za)

NICD Hotline: 0800 029 999  
WhatsApp 'Hi' to 0600 123 456

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# DPSA MINISTER VISITS EDENDALE THUTHUZELA CENTRE



**Last Week Deputy Minister for the Department of Public Service And Administration, Honourable Sindisiwe Chikunga visited Edendale Hospital's Thuthuzela Centre to commend the facility for its contribution against Gender Based Violence (GBV).**

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Minister Chikunga said, "[We have come to] appreciate the Edendale Hospital management for ensuring that there is a quality cadre of health professionals, SAPS and the NPSA armed with the requisite skills to address and attend to victims of GBVF.

Despite the challenges experienced by the operations of the Centre it is really remarkable to see the level of dedication to service

displayed by the Thuthuzela Care Centre Staff.

In this Public Service Month we really appreciate your selfless service, you are the embodiment of the Batho Pele Principles.

You live the ethos of the Public Service Charter in your daily discharge of public service."

# PORT SHEPSTONE HOSPITAL NURSES “WALK THE TALK” IN PROMOTING AND PRACTICING GOOD CLIENT SERVICE



**Nurses from Port Shepstone Hospital have shown that once again that they do not only pay lip service to good customer care, but they are also more than prepared to walk the talk.**

This became apparent when fifty nursing personnel participated in a 3km walk from the hospital to Kapenta Bay Hotel. The health workers could not have asked for better

weather: the sun and sea breeze made the walk a refreshing experience.

During this occasion, the metaphor ‘walk the talk’ was used to strengthen the nurses’ resolve to promote and highlight good nursing practices, and excellent patient-centered culture when carrying out their day-to-day duties.

As 2020 is still considered as the year to celebrate nurses worldwide, all categories of nursing staff participated in this event. Speaking ahead

of the walk, nursing manager, Mrs Thembi Mkhize, congratulated the participants, and thanked them for working tirelessly and with dedication, even during the height of the deadly COVID – 19 pandemic.

She urged them to persevere, and continue to treat patients with care, love, respect, and to always advocate for them. “As professionals, we should at all times be true ambassadors of ethics and professionalism by ensuring fairness,

truthfulness, accountability and confidentiality in our practices as enshrined in the Nursing Code of Ethics,” she said.

After the walk, nursing staff and their managers participated in various physical activities, including games that promote teamwork.

They enjoyed a healthy snack, and then walked back to the hospital to put their words into practice.



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# KICK YOUR **BAD HABITS** TO **PREVENT** THE NUMBER ONE KILLER

**According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Cardiovascular Diseases (CVDs) are the number one cause of death globally: more people die annually from CVDs than from any other cause.”**

The organization also reports that an estimated 17.9 million people died from CVDs in 2016, representing 31% of all global deaths and 43% of adult deaths in South Africa in 2017. Of these deaths, 85% are due to heart attack and stroke.

Fortunately, changing our lifestyle habits can lower our risk of developing heart disease.

## HABITS TO KICK

- **Smoking: Stop smoking altogether.**

Although smoking is discouraged for both genders, the World Heart Federation states that smoking is riskier for women, with female smokers running a 25% higher risk for heart disease than male smokers.

Smoking or chewing tobacco damages blood vessels, temporarily raises blood pressure and lowers exercise tolerance. By lowering the oxygen our blood can carry, tobacco use increases the risk of blood clots that can also lead to stroke and sudden death.

- **Drinking: Limit your intake.**

According to the WHO alcohol compromises the body's immune system and increases the risk of adverse health outcomes. Therefore, people should minimize their alcohol consumption at any time, and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Being a Couch Potato:**

Find a more creative way to be more active such as dancing, taking brisk walks or home aerobic classes. Moderate intensity workouts for thirty minutes are recommended daily.

- **Junk Food:**

Junk food contributes to the development of many chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and even high cholesterol which in turn can lead to chronic heart disease. Snack on fruits or healthy alternatives such as popcorn instead of potato chips or roasted chicken instead of deep fried chicken.

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# USE TO BEAT

This year's World Heart Day theme is **"Use Heart to Beat CVDs"**

## Your head

To understand what it takes to live a heart healthy life and to act on that knowledge, changing your behaviour for a better quality of life now and in the future.

## Your influence

As an individual to set an example for your loved ones.

As a healthcare professional to help your patients make positive changes for their heart health.

As an employer to invest in the heart health of your employees.

As a government to implement policies and initiatives that will lead to better societal heart health, such as sugar taxes, smoking bans and reducing air pollution.

## Your compassion

To look beyond the self and act in ways that support the most vulnerable in society; those with underlying heart-related conditions that may put them at greater risk in the time of COVID-19.

*-The World Health Federation*



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# EYE CARE IS ESSENTIAL

**World Eye Care Awareness Month, which started on the 15 September to 18 October, is still ongoing. The Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal Health is urging people of the Province to take better care of their eyes to prevent problems and act quickly when ailments arise.**

Most eye conditions can be successfully treated if detected early.

#### **Here is a simple practical guide to protect eyes:**

- Get your eyes tested and take practical measures to protect them against injuries.
- Visit an optometrist, doctor or the nurse at the clinic regularly and don't ignore problems with your eyes. In this way you can detect and treat eye conditions early.
- Protect your eyes from injury from foreign objects that can lead to infection or damage. Wear protective eye-wear when working with equipment to prevent objects from entering the eye.

- Wear sunglasses for protection from the damaging rays of the sun.
- Take regular breaks from your computer screen to minimize eye strain and the development of eye focusing problems.

A comprehensive eye examination will not only determine if you need spectacles but also the presence of eye disease. Common eye diseases such as glaucoma have no early warning signs and can result in irreversible sight loss if not caught in time. Instead, vision deteriorates silently and painlessly until it results in complete blindness.

If glaucoma is detected early and is correctly treated, vision loss and blindness may be prevented. Cataracts, macular degeneration and melanomas are prevalent in South Africa due to the high ultra-violet light exposure.

Your optometrist will be able to advise you on protective eyewear and eye care tips. About 80% of blindness is avoidable either through prevention or through treatment, which is why it is important to get your eyes tested at least once per year.

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# END RABIES: COLLABORATE, VACCINATE



This week there was much focus on the friendliest domestic animals which live side by side with human beings are often counted as valuable members of family households.

Those are the dogs we keep in our homes. The focus was on their health examination, particularly for the most common disease amongst them which is rabies.

World Rabies Day is celebrated annually, on September 28 to raise awareness about rabies prevention and provides a platform to improve awareness by engaging communities and helping endemic countries in building successful and sustainable rabies programmes.

Awareness and education are vital to the success of the Zero By 30 campaign which is the global strategic plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies. The theme for 2020 focuses on vaccination and collaboration.

Today, safe and efficacious animal and human vaccines are among the important tools that exist to eliminate human deaths from rabies while awareness is the key driver for success in encouraging communities to engage in effective rabies prevention.

## KEY FACTS ABOUT RABIES

- Rabies is a zoonotic disease which means it is spread from animals to humans.
- Rabies is a vaccine-preventable viral disease which occurs in more than 150 countries and territories.
- Dogs are the main source of human rabies deaths, contributing to 99% of all rabies transmissions to humans.
- 40% of people bitten by suspect rabid animals are children under 15 years of age.
- Immediate, thorough wound washing with soap and water after contact with a suspect rabid animal is crucial and can save lives.
- Engagement of multiple sectors, including community education, awareness programmes and vaccination campaigns are critical.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) leads the collective "United Against Rabies" to drive progress towards "Zero human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030".

### The symptoms of rabies in humans include:

Headache and fever, irritability, restlessness and anxiety, muscle pain and vomiting, mental disorder, profuse salivation, and difficult swallowing.

At the time of publication, KwaZulu-Natal had 4 human deaths from rabies in the past three months (3 were lab confirmed and 1 was recorded as a probable death). All deaths occurred in Ethekewini and involved children.

### The province is emphasizing the following to be on-going in all districts and health facilities:

- Stress the importance of seeking prompt medical attention following an animal bite or scratch.
- All health care workers are to manage animal bites correctly using the current protocols.
- Rabies post exposure prophylaxis is readily available at all health facilities ie vaccines.
- There must be on-going in-service training of health care workers which includes doctors.
- Use the NICD hotline number: Tel No. 082 883 9920. This is only for health care workers to contact the NICD hotline for clinical advice if needed.



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# THERE IS NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH

World Mental Awareness month in 2020 (October) comes at a time when our normal daily lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.



With it, it has brought waves of fear, stress and uncertainty, and understandably so as this was an unprecedented crisis with various challenges to individuals, families and the economy.

COVID-19 has seen many healthcare workers working under pressure, students having to take online classes, workers having to worry about their jobs and livelihoods and many others having to deal with their mental illnesses while self-isolating alone at home.

October is observed as Mental Awareness Month and aims to educate the public about mental health and help reduce the stigma and discrimination around mental health and its sufferers.

**Here are some questions on mental health that might help you have a better understanding of it:**

## What is mental health and why is it so important?

The World Health Organization describes mental health as 'a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her

own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

Mental health is important for overall health and productivity, one needs to have a healthy mind in order to have a healthy body. Mental health is also vital for general well-being as it affects one's ability to think, interact with others, work and enjoy everyday life.

## What are the different types of mental illnesses?

People may experience different types of mental illnesses and at times they can occur at the same time.

## While they are many types of mental illnesses, these are the most common ones:

- Depression
- Bipolar
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Schizophrenia
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Anxiety
- Dementia

## What are the signs of having a mental illness?

**Although every mental illness has its own signs and symptoms, some common signs might include:**

- Emotional symptoms like feeling anxious, sad or scared

- Cognitive symptoms like difficulty in thinking clearly and memory disturbance

- Behavioural problems like aggression, inability to perform daily routine functions, excessive use of substances like pills, alcohol and other drugs and speaking to oneself

- Perceptual symptoms like hearing voices that other people do not hear and seeing things that other people do not see, as well as feeling touched by things that other people do not feel.

## How can you improve your mental health?

- **Talking about your feelings** – finding someone you trust or a counsellor and telling them about your feelings of sadness and anxiety.

- **Keeping active** – exercise can help keep the brain and body healthy and can also improve your mood.

- **Eating well** – the food that we consume plays a major role in how we feel mentally and physically. Our brains need nutrients to function properly and stay healthy, eating foods such as greens, fatty fish and eggs

will help your mind and body be in good working condition.

- **Getting enough sleep** – the average adult is supposed to have a minimum of 7 hours of sleep a night. Sleep deprivation affects your psychological state and mental health, and those could lead you to have insomnia or other sleep disorders.

- **Avoiding alcohol** – alcohol consumption is associated with mental and behavioural disorders, including alcohol addiction, cardiovascular disease and liver issues.

## Getting help

Mental illness can be treated with medication and/or counselling. It is important to complete the prescribed treatment programme.

The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) offer counselling support, and with the COVID-19 pandemic, still in our midst, they also offer online counselling.

You could visit their website on [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org) or call their helpline on **0800 456 789**. The Department also has several psychiatric hospitals such as Townhill and Fort Napier in uMgungundlovu District.

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL HYGIENE

**Good personal hygiene is very important for both health and social reasons. If you have a personal hygiene problem, odour isn't the only negative by-product. In fact, poor hygiene can spread illness, according to the World Health Organisation ((WHO)).**

It also affects interpersonal relationships, social interactions and job or school performance. Good hygiene, on the other hand, makes you come off as a capable person with self-worth and self-confidence. It also helps you stay healthy, clean-looking and attractive.

## GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE HABITS INCLUDE:

- Cleaning your body every day
- Changing into clean clothes
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue (or your sleeve) when sneezing or coughing
- Trimming your fingernails and toenails regularly
- Brushing your teeth twice a day
- Washing your hands with soap after going to the toilet
- Washing hands with soap before preparing and/or eating food
- Washing your hair with soap or shampoo at least once a week

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR CREATING A GOOD HYGIENE ROUTINE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- **Make it a habit:** With daily practice, a new habit can become a regular part of life. Choose one area to focus on and practice it until it becomes second nature.
- **Set reminders:** Using a reminder app on a cell phone can be a great way to avoid forgetting any tasks.

- **Use rewards:** A sticker chart can be a brilliant incentive for children to maintain their personal hygiene.

- **Invest in nice toiletries:** Using products that smell good may encourage some people to stick to their personal hygiene routine.

- **Practice makes perfect:** It takes time to learn a new habit. Start with a new habit at the beginning of the week and make it your priority.

to these practices, talk with your doctor or dentist. Sometimes, explanations and demonstrations are a good jump-start for taking better care of yourself. This is especially true for kids.

A doctor can better explain the consequences of not caring for yourself, and a parent can use them as backup for building habits that will last a lifetime.

## TAKEAWAY

Building good personal hygiene habits takes a lifetime of learning and honing. Caring for yourself in this manner is good for your physical health as well as your mental health.

If you find it difficult to adapt



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