

How are you?

Experiencing a disaster can be overwhelming. It's normal for you and your whānau to feel upset, anxious and physically drained during and after an emergency event.

A variety of reactions are normal – everyone reacts differently in unfamiliar or upsetting situations. Some people may never have a reaction. Others may have delayed reactions that show up days, weeks or even months after the disaster happens.

Understanding the biological reason behind why we're feeling a certain way can help us process and work through unfamiliar emotions. During scary or surprising events, our brains react chemically – releasing adrenaline, triggering a 'fight-or-flight' response. This response is our natural alarm system – our body telling us to be alert and ready for action. It's there to help us, but afterwards, we can feel shaky, queasy or on-edge, and it can make it hard for us to concentrate.

Sometimes post-disaster stress and sadness can be ongoing. It can affect your physical and mental health and wellbeing. In these situations, it's important to connect with others, find positive ways of coping, and reach out for help.

Building Mental Wellbeing and Resilience

Good mental health helps us carry on and deal with all that life throws at us. Here are some things you can do:

- Connect with friends, whānau, neighbours and colleagues
- Breathe! Calming your breathing settles your stress response
- Do some light exercise
- Help a friend or neighbour – connections and kindness build community resilience and help lift our mood
- Take a break from the news and social media
- Free call or text 1737 to speak to a trained counsellor (available 24 hours a day)
- Talk to a health professional or mental health provider if you're not coping

Mental Wellbeing Support

Call or Text 1737

- For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text 1737 – free, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - to talk it through with a trained counsellor.

Contact your family doctor

- General Practice visits are free for flood related healthcare.
- Up to three General Practice visits are free for mental healthcare relating to the weather event.
- Ask your General Practice about their Mental Health Brief Intervention Service.
- Health navigators are available to provide assistance navigating health and social needs.

Financial Support

Civil Defence Payments are available through the Ministry of Social Development for people who have been affected by the floods and slips in Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough.

**Call Work and Income on
0800 559 009
Monday-Friday, 7am-6pm.**

These can help with:

- Emergency food, clothing and bedding if yours has been damaged or destroyed.
- Accommodation costs if you have evacuated
- Loss of income due to an inability to work caused by the flooding.