



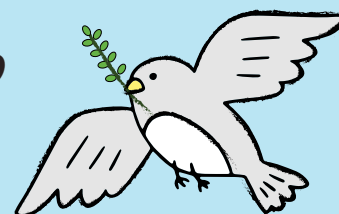
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India



Guide to address stigma associated with COVID-19



#TogetherAgainstCOVID19



COVID-19 pandemic is a public health emergency that is causing a stressful and a difficult time for everyone. During this crisis, rumours and misinformation create more stress and can hamper COVID-19 recovery.

■ Why is there Stigma?

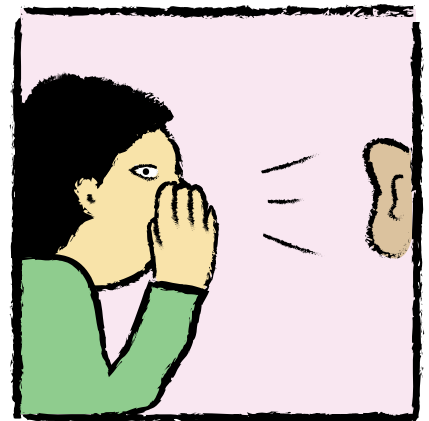
Stigma associated with COVID-19 is based on three main factors:



Lack of adequate information



Fear of the disease



Rumours or misinformation

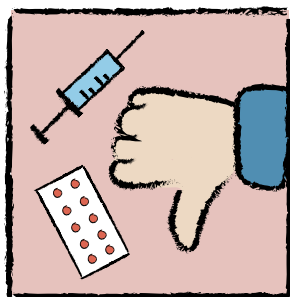
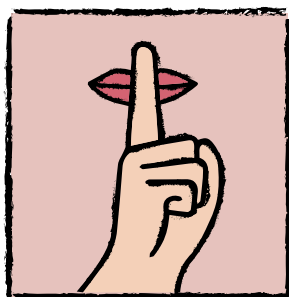
People facing Stigma and Discrimination:

- People affected with COVID-19, their families /caregivers / friends
- People under quarantine and their families
- Frontline health care providers like doctors, nurses, paramedics, field workers, hospital staff and sanitation workers etc.
- Those who have recovered from COVID-19
- Migrant workers



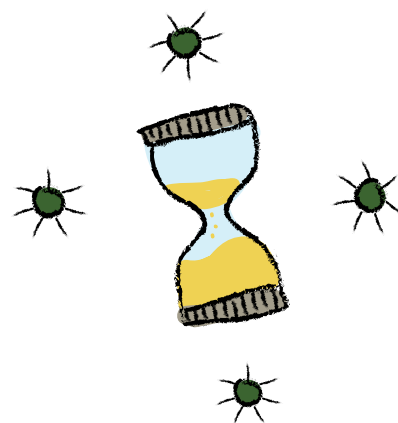
Effects of Stigma and Discrimination:

- People concealing symptoms
- Hesitancy in seeking medical care
- People not adhering to interventions like home quarantine
- Increased sense of emotional isolation, feeling of guilt and anxiety
- Lack of self-esteem and confidence
- Ostracisation of healthcare workers and others involved in COVID-19 management
- Worsening of pre-existing psychiatric illness such as depression



These may lead to:

- COVID-19 cases not being reported, or reported late, making management of the outbreak more difficult.
- Diversion from the required preventive measures which need to be undertaken.



Things to know about COVID-19:

1. Although COVID-19 is highly contagious, we can protect ourselves by following preventive measures such as physical distancing, washing hands frequently and wearing a face cover / mask.
2. Despite precautions, if a person contracts COVID-19, it is not his/her fault. Anyone is susceptible to contracting the disease, no one needs to be blamed.

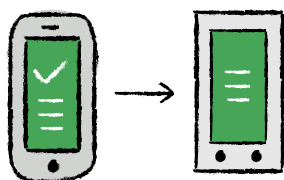
3. In situations of distress, the patient and the family need support and cooperation.
4. Be a well-wisher to those in isolation/ quarantine and their families.
Testing, isolation and quarantine are meant to protect the family and community.
5. Celebrate persons who have recovered from COVID-19 as WINNERS.
They do not have the virus & there is no risk of transmission.

Tips to reduce stigma related to COVID-19:

Dos



- ✓ Be appreciative and supportive of efforts made by frontline workers



- ✓ Verify the information from a reliable source such as Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's website, before sharing or forwarding the same



- ✓ Share positive stories of those who have recovered from COVID-19

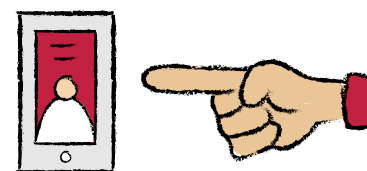
Don'ts



- ✗ Don't spread misinformation



- ✗ Don't label any individual, group or area for spread of COVID-19



- ✗ Don't spread name, identity, locality of persons affected or under quarantine

To know more visit: www.mohfw.gov.in