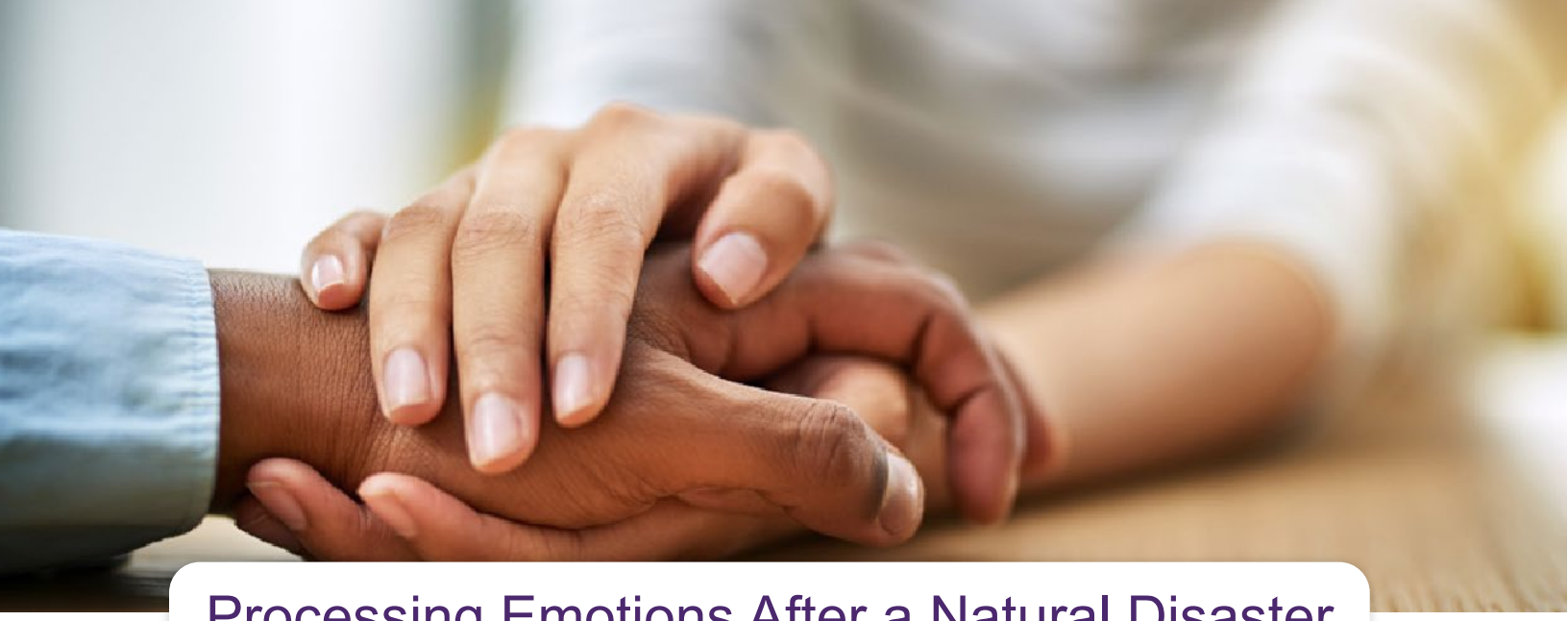


Processing Emotions After a Natural Disaster

The Impact of Disaster

Experiencing a natural disaster can be a sudden and overwhelming event that leaves you feeling as though your life has been turned upside down. These events are not only physically destructive to our homes and workplaces but also deeply disorienting to our mental well-being. It is completely normal to feel shaken, uncertain, or afraid in the wake of such chaos. Recognizing that these intense reactions are common and valid is the first essential step in helping yourself or a loved one begin the long journey toward healing.

Common Physical and Emotional Responses

In the aftermath, stress often manifests physically through disrupted sleep patterns, changes in appetite, persistent muscle tension, or frequent headaches. Mentally, you may find it difficult to concentrate or feel completely drained by even the smallest daily tasks, which can lead to behavioral changes such as irritability, social withdrawal, or increased tension in your closest relationships. Emotionally, it is common to grapple with a complex mix of shock, anger, and vulnerability, often accompanied by a deep sense of powerlessness in the face of a major event.

Strategies for Recovery and Support

To support your recovery, prioritize your physical needs by resting, hydrating, and establishing comforting routines while limiting substances like caffeine and alcohol that can disrupt your body's natural coping mechanisms. Focus on achieving small, controllable goals each day to restore a sense of stability, and seek connection with supportive friends, family, or professional counselors. Remember that healing takes time and occurs at a different pace for everyone; be patient with yourself and give yourself full permission to recover at your own speed.

TELUS Health provides referrals to qualified mental health professionals that can help. Call TELUS Health at **800-245-1150** to speak to your designated Care Coordinator about your benefits and options for support.