

How To Activate the CISM team—and what to expect

If you or your team have experienced a Critical Incident, call the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) at **1-800-663-3456** to request assistance from the CISM program.

ECC will contact a CISM Program Dispatcher who will call you back to arrange next steps.

The focus of CISM is the relief of distress symptoms for healthy people who have experienced traumatic events.

Experience has shown that people who participate in CISM interventions reduce their stress related symptoms, enjoy better health, enjoy happier relationships and are more productive at work and with their SAR group.

Any SAR member or family member of SAR volunteers can activate CISM.

CISM participation is voluntary and confidential.



You Are Our Most Valuable Asset

These are some practical strategies that will help you to mitigate the symptoms of Critical Incident Stress:

- Eat healthy foods, drink lots of water
- Get regular exercise – preferably outdoors
- Find someone supportive to talk to
- Take time for leisure activities
- Spend time with family and friends
- Maintain a regular routine
- Get ample rest

Get extra help if you need it. Contact the CISM team which will provide individual or group support and can also provide referrals to professional assistance.



To activate the CISM team, call:

1-800-663-3456

For more information: www.bcsara.com/cism

Tough Callouts

It's a matter of "when" not "if"

Critical Incident Stress is an occupational reality for SAR volunteers.

SAR volunteers can face tough calls (Critical Incidents):

- Death, injury or near miss of a colleague
- Body recovery
- SAR for a child
- SAR for a friend or prominent community member
- Prolonged callouts
- Evacuation notifications
- Intense media coverage



For more information on self-care strategies, visit: www.bcsara.com/cism

The BCSARA Critical Incident Stress Management Program

— A Service for SAR Volunteers in BC



Wounds Aren't Always Visible

Critical Incident Stress is a normal reaction to an abnormal, stressful event.

It is an unusually strong reaction that has the potential to prevent the individual from maintaining their normal duties and responsibilities. These strong reactions may occur shortly after a stressful incident or even weeks or months later.

Critical Incident Stress can also be caused by the cumulative effect of a series of events.

Know the Symptoms of Critical Incident Stress and Know How to Seek Help.

Some Common Symptoms of Critical Incident Stress:

- Feeling depressed, sad or irritable
- Sleep disruption
- Vivid dreams or flashbacks
- Loss of appetite, digestive issues
- Lack of energy or problems concentrating
- Overwhelming feelings of sadness, guilt, frustration or anxiety
- Unable to let go of task
- Chest pains, rapid heart rate or elevated blood pressure
- Change in sex drive
- Avoiding social contact or withdrawal
- Neglect of normal routine
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs



Any noticeable change post task can be related to Critical Incident Stress.

Critical Incident Stress can affect your physical and emotional health, impair your cognitive ability or upset your normal routine.

The BCSARA CISM Team

The Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team consists of SAR members specifically trained to assist SAR members and SAR groups to understand and reduce the impacts of critical incident stress.

The CISM team provides a range of confidential services:

- One-on-one support, in person or by phone
- Interventions for SAR groups
- On scene support for SAR members
- Referral to professional care

The CISM team also provides a range of education and awareness presentations for SAR teams and trainees. Each presentation is customized to the needs of the group.



The CISM team stands ready to assist SAR members and SAR groups

1-800-663-3456