

LIVE WELL, WORK WELL



Workplace Stress

Nearly 80% of Americans consider their jobs stressful. While it may not be possible to eliminate job stress altogether, you can learn to manage it effectively.

Common job stressors include a heavy workload, intense pressure to perform at high levels, job insecurity, long work hours, excessive travel, office politics, and conflicts with co-workers.

Health and wellness tips for your work, home, and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at Woodruff Sawyer.

While dealing with stress is a normal part of everyday life, here are some early warning signs that signify red flags, alerting you to stress on the job:

- Insomnia
- Short temper
- Anxiety or depression
- Headache
- Low morale
- Stomach or Back Problems

Managing Job Stress

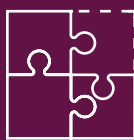
The good news is that it is possible to manage job stress by becoming aware of what increases or decreases your stress levels. Here are six methods to help manage stress at work:

- **Plan and prioritize:** Do not panic, make a list to prioritize your work, set realistic deadlines, do not rush into the first idea you have and always have an alternative plan.
- **Focus on what you can control:** You know what your job tasks are. Break the larger tasks into smaller, more doable steps.
- **Slow down:** Think things through before you act, and begin with a result in mind.
- **Limit interruptions:** Use your voicemail to your advantage and only take calls that are a priority when you are on a tight deadline. Set aside designated times throughout the day to respond to e-mails and phone calls.
- **Use all of your resources:** If things do not go exactly as planned, do not solely rely on yourself. Ask for help when you need it.
- **Take a break:** To release stress, make time to take a short break. Taking a walk or discussing your work situation with another person may help you gain a fresh perspective.





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Preventing Burnout

The World Health Organization (WHO) now considers burnout to be a syndrome. In previous editions of the WHO's International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), burnout wasn't considered a serious condition, and its only listed symptom was exhaustion.

The WHO's decision to upgrade burnout to a syndrome and provide a detailed set of symptoms communicates its serious stance on the dangers of burnout. Additionally, the WHO clarified in a public statement that burnout is an "occupational phenomenon" resulting from "chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."

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What is burnout?

According to the WHO's ICD-11, doctors can diagnose you with burnout if you exhibit the following symptoms:

- Exhaustion or energy depletion
- Decreased engagement at work, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to your job
- Reduced productivity or efficacy

The negative effects of burnout can extend beyond the workplace and into your home and social life. It can also increase your risk of getting sick and developing chronic conditions.

How can I recognize burnout?

Since burnout is the result of prolonged and chronic workplace

stress, it's important to know how to recognize the signs of workplace stress. Common job stressors include:

- Heavy workload
- Intense pressure to perform at high levels
- Job insecurity
- Long work hours
- Excessive travel
- Office politics
- Conflict with co-workers

While dealing with stress is a normal part of everyday life, here are some early warning signs that signify red flags, alerting you to stress on the job:

- Anxiety or depression
- Low morale
- Short temper

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- Headache
- Stomach or back problems
- Fatigue

If you experience any of these symptoms, it may be time to talk to your supervisor or manager to address your chronic stress.

Manage Your Job Stress to Prevent Burnout

Reducing your job stress is crucial for preventing burnout. Here are some simple ways to get your workplace stress under control:

- *Plan and prioritize*—When you're feeling stressed out, don't panic. Make a list of the tasks you need to complete, and set realistic deadlines.
- *Focus on what you can control*—You know what your job tasks are. Break the larger tasks into smaller, more doable steps.
- *Slow down*—When you have a lot of tasks looming over you, it can be tempting to hurry through them just to get them off your plate. Rushing through tasks, though, can cause you to feel more stressed and increase the odds of mistakes being made. Take a deep breath when you start to get overwhelmed, and slow down.
- *Maintain a good attitude*—Try to think positively about tasks at work—avoid negative thinkers and always acknowledge your accomplishments, even if it's just by mentally congratulating yourself.

- *Ask for help*—Sometimes the best way to overcome your workplace stress is to ask peers or your superiors for help.

What should I do if I think

I'm experiencing burnout?

If you feel like you're burned out, you should talk to your supervisor or manager, as they may be able to help you reduce your workplace stress or direct you to valuable workplace resources, like an employee assistance program.

Talking to other co-workers, friends or family may also be helpful, as they may have insight into how you can reduce your stress and improve your burnout syndrome. Implementing healthy stress coping mechanisms, such as exercising, hanging out with friends or taking time off from work, can also help alleviate your stress.

For more information on burnout, [click here](#).



DON'T STRESS OUT YOU'RE NOT ALONE

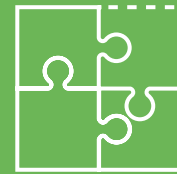
If you're feeling stressed at work, you're among the 80% of Americans who feel the same way. In fact, you may be experiencing the symptoms of stress without knowing it. It's important to learn the warning signs of stress so you know when to seek help.



How to Fight Back

While it may not be possible to eliminate all of the stressors in your life, there are plenty of ways to reduce feeling overworked while on the job. Recognizing the signs of stress is the first step to improving your health. Consider these tactics next time you feel wound up:

- Plan and prioritize your most important responsibilities.
- Limit interruptions so you don't have to refocus each time you're distracted. Some ways to limit distractions include using a do-not-disturb function on your phone or blocking off time in your calendar to finish a project.
- Take breaks away from your workstation to mentally regroup. Consider going for a short walk to re-energize your mind.
- Listen to relaxing music to help you calm down.
- Take time off from work to clear your mind.



Stress affects your mental health, but it can show itself in other ways too. Back pain, poor focus and headaches can all be symptoms of stress. Here are some other signals that you may be feeling stressed:

- Having trouble sleeping
- Feeling anxious or depressed
- Getting snippy with others
- Experiencing stomach or back problems

If you still have trouble coping with stress, talk with your doctor about treatment options. Don't wait too long before seeking help or you risk letting the stress pile up. Has the resources to help you. Contact us today for more information.

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Selecting a Mental Health Professional

For the many Americans that seek help from mental health professionals, selecting a provider is an important decision that should be made carefully. Credentials, competence and your comfort level with the provider are worth considering.

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Psychiatrists

Have medical degrees, can prescribe medication and have completed three years of residency training (beyond medical school) in mental health care.

Psychologists

Have a doctorate in psychology and, generally, complete one or two years of internship prior to licensure.

Professional Counselors

Have a minimum of a master's degree in a mental health discipline, and at least two years of post-graduate supervised experience.

Marriage and Family Therapists

Typically have a master's degree or doctorate in marriage and family

therapy, and at least one year of supervised practice.

Social Workers

Have a minimum of a master's degree in social work and at least two years of post-graduate supervised experience.

Who's the Best Fit?

Finding the right mental health professional requires a mental illness, it can be difficult to do that work on your own. If you are in this situation, ask family, friends or your primary physician for assistance. Here are some dependable ways to locate a provider:

- Through referrals by physician, friends or family members
- Ask your health insurance company for a list of providers
- Check your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at work for a referral



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Also take into account factors that are important to you like age, race, gender, religion and cultural background. It is not wrong to rule out certain providers because they don't meet the criteria; you will be establishing a long-term relationship with this person, and you need to feel as comfortable with him or her as possible.

Questions to ask:

- What types of treatment do you provide?
- What is your training or experience with my problem area?
- How will we determine treatment goals?
- How will we measure my progress?
- What do you expect from me?
- What are your office hours?
- How do you handle emergencies?
- Do you charge for missed appointments?
- Are you in my health plan's provider network?





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