

KNOW YOUR BENEFITS



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (EAPS)

An employee assistance program is an employer-sponsored program that offers services to help employees deal with personal problems.

Employee productivity is important for any business' success, but sometimes employees are too overwhelmed by personal or behavioral problems to perform at their highest level. High stress, psychological problems, substance abuse, legal troubles and other personal issues can lead to lower productivity and focus during work, increased absenteeism and higher health care costs. An EAP can address these issues and help you tend to your personal needs.

What is an EAP?

An employee assistance program is an employer-sponsored program that offers services to help you deal with personal problems. EAPs can help reduce your health care and disability claims, increase your productivity and morale and lower absenteeism.

What do EAPs cover?

EAPs can vary from employer to employer, but most have common elements. Some programs are limited and stick to alcohol and drug abuse, but many programs offer expanded services that address a variety of areas. Typical issues addressed include the following:

- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Smoking cessation
- Divorce/marital problems
- Stress management
- Crisis intervention
- Child care
- Eldercare
- Eating disorders
- Gambling addiction
- Psychological or psychiatric problems
- Legal problems

If you are struggling with a personal issue, our EAP can help you tackle issues before they become more serious and difficult to manage. For more information about the program or how to get started, please contact the human resources department.

STRUGGLING?



Are personal problems affecting your focus and performance at work?

You are not alone. The EAP offers services to help you deal with personal problems you may be facing.

Our Employee Assistance Program Can Help

What does the EAP cover?

Your EAP covers a variety of areas that you may be having trouble with, such as:

- Substance abuse
- Stress Management
- Financial problems

EAP's offer education, awareness, and counselling services to help you with your problems. And your participation in the program is strictly confidential.

For more information about your EAP, contact the human resources department.

KNOW YOUR BENEFITS



WORKPLACE STRESS AND YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

While many people enjoy their job, most experience job stress at some time during their working hours. For some, this stress can become severe and impact their health and well-being. Fortunately, there are ways to cope with workplace stress.

What is Job Stress?

Job stress is the chronic state in which stressful conditions in the workplace impact a person's performance and well-being in a negative way, and can cause physical and/or emotional illnesses.

Causes

According to the United Nations' International Labor Organization, a majority of Americans consider their jobs to be stressful. Job stress may be caused by one or more of the following:

- Job insecurity
- Extremely long work hours
- Intense pressure to perform at peak levels all the time
- Excessive travel
- Too much time away from family
- Harassment or any other traumatic event
- Office politics
- Conflict with coworker(s)
- Unclear job responsibilities
- Lack of control
- Technology

JOB STRESS



Increased stress at work often negatively impacts otherwise happy employees.

Watch for signs of job stress, including:

- Headache
- Sleep disturbances
- Upset Stomach
- Difficulty concentrating and focusing
- Irritable mood
- Low morale
- Negative relationships with family & friends

To avoid these health problems and maintain high job satisfaction, consider the following tips:

- Set realistic goals and don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself
- 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
- Take a short break if you start to feel stressed

WORKPLACE STRESS AND YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In addition, problems in one's personal life can cause significant stress on the job. Financial trouble, marital trouble, grief and other family or personal issues can cause distraction and stress throughout the day, impacting a person's job performance and health.



According to the United Nations' International Labor Organization, the majority of Americans consider their job to be stressful.

Symptoms

The signs of stress will vary depending on the person, situation, duration and intensity of the stressor(s), but typical job stress includes the following:

- Insomnia
- Loss of mental concentration
- Anxiety
- Substance abuse
- Extreme anger or frustration
- Family conflict
- Illnesses such as heart disease, migraine headaches, stomach problems and back problems

Negative Effects of Job Stress

Research indicates that many medical problems stem from stress. These medical problems are costly, in the form of lost wages, increased medical costs and decreased productivity. In addition, on-the-job accidents occur more frequently to stressed employees. Stress can cause shorter attention spans and fatigue, both of which heighten the risk for workplace injuries. Also, when workers are feeling pressured to complete more work in less time, they are more likely to take risky shortcuts.

Managing Job Stress

It is important to understand what affects your stress levels at work, so you can better manage that stress. Try the following suggestions:

- *Plan and prioritize.* Don't panic when faced with stressful situations. Set realistic deadlines for yourself and prioritize your tasks to stay focused.
- *Slow down.* Think things through before you act on them and begin with an end result in mind. If you take the time to complete a task safely and accurately, it will reduce your stress in the long run.
- *Think outside the box.* If you're feeling too overwhelmed, take a break from your task and come back later with a fresh perspective. Try approaching situations from a new angle or asking a colleague for input if you are feeling stuck.
- *Use all your resources.* You are not completely on your own. Seek the help of co-workers, advice from your supervisor or investigate external resources for solving a problem or handling a situation. Talk with your manager if you are feeling confused or overwhelmed, or need additional resources or direction.



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- *Keep in contact.* Consistently communicate with co-workers, managers and clients. Their priorities and deadlines could change (and so can yours), so proper communication will ensure that everyone is on the same page.
- *Address your personal problems.* If you are having family or personal issues that are carrying over into your workday and causing you constant stress, you should do your best to address those issues. Work often will be less stressful if you are not worrying about other problems as well.

Getting Help

Everyone experiences periods of stress. Some stress is normal, but if your feelings of stress become persistent and overwhelming it may be an indication of a serious medical problem. In such a case, you should see your doctor or use your company's Employee Assistance Program if one is available.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The business community has come to recognize that everyday work stress can negatively affect employees' attendance, concentration, health and ability to perform on the job. Because of this, the number of companies adding EAP programs as an employee benefit has substantially increased.

An EAP supplies professional counselors who provide counseling to you and your family in a safe and private atmosphere. All the information disclosed will remain confidential, and no contact with your employer will be made without written permission. Using an EAP will not jeopardize your job or chance for promotion.

EAPs typically can address the following issues:

- Stress about work or job performance
- Conflict resolution at work or in one's personal life
- Depression
- Marital or relationship problems
- Child or eldercare concerns
- Financial worries
- Mental health problems
- Alcohol/substance abuse
- Grief
- Interpersonal conflicts

The EAP program makes a limited number of counseling sessions available at no cost. Should you and your counselor decide that a referral to an outside provider is necessary, those costs will then be your responsibility.

For more information regarding 's EAP program, please contact our human resources department



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

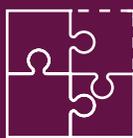
The good news is that it is possible to manage job stress by becoming aware of what increases or decreases your stress levels. Here are six methods to help manage stress at work:

- **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.





LIVE WELL, WORK WELL



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."

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

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

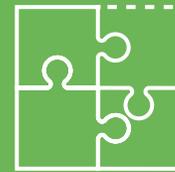
If you're feeling stressed at work, you're among the 80% of Americans who feel the same way. In fact, you may be experiencing the symptoms of stress without knowing it. It's important to learn the warning signs of stress so you know when to seek help.



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.

LIVE WELL, WORK WELL



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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