

5 Minute Safety Talk

Workplace Stress

Managing Workplace Stress

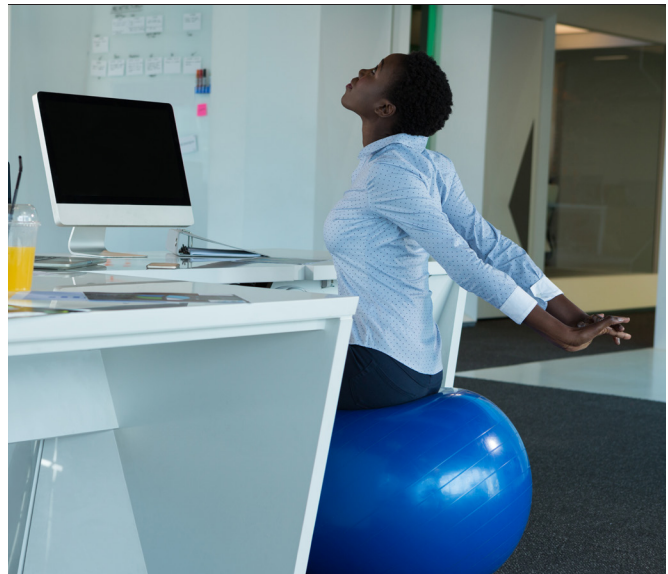
The reasons for workplace stress can seem completely out of your control. Some are, and some are not. With preparation and coping strategies, you can help eliminate some of the stress and have a healthy, productive work-life balance.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is the physical or emotional tension that stems from demanding circumstances. Some kinds of stress are positive and short-term, for example competing in sports or learning a new skill. Stress has negative effects – or may last longer – when you feel pressure over circumstances you can't control, or when too many stressful situations are happening at once. Uncontrolled stress can take a toll on your health and wellbeing.

WHAT ISSUES AND SITUATIONS CAN CAUSE STRESS AT WORK AND OUTSIDE OF WORK?

- **Productivity expectations:** High workloads, long hours, strict schedules, poor environmental conditions, not having the right tools for the job and individual performance goals may make you feel you can't meet the demands of your job.
- **Company performance:** If production, sales or profit goals are not met, you might anticipate layoffs, salary freezes or reduced growth opportunities.
- **24/7 connectivity:** Email, cell phones and other workplace technology can make it difficult to separate home and work life.
- **Personal life:** You are trying to balance family and work obligations, including meeting the needs of your spouse, children, parents and friends, maintaining a social life and contributing to the community.



- **Health issues:** You might be dealing with your own or a family member's chronic health problem.

Just one or two of these stressful situations might be manageable, but when too many occur at once, it can affect your health, your ability to succeed at work and your self-esteem.

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE YOUR OWN STRESS LEVEL?

- Think about the stressful situation and find a solution. Talk to your manager, your doctor, a family member or friend about what's causing your stress. They care and will help you find a solution.



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- **Get enough sleep.** For most adults, sleeping seven to nine hours a night, every night, helps restore your mental and physical energy.
- **Eat healthy food and healthy portions.** Fresh fruits and vegetables, lean protein (either meat or plant-based), and whole grain foods like oatmeal should make up most of your diet. Sugary, fried, salty or processed foods can complicate health issues like diabetes and heart disease, so eat them rarely or not at all.
- **Exercise for 30 minutes a day.** This can be as simple as taking your dog for a long walk or going on a bike ride with the kids.
- **Leave your work at work.** Adopt a small ritual that divides work from your personal life. For example, put your hardhat in your locker or shut off your work phone while thinking, "Work is done for today. When I get home I will do X for myself and my family."

By maintaining these healthy habits, you can make your body and mind more resilient, and be better able to deal with the stressful events that come your way.

Other solutions to consider:

- Avoid Caffeine, Alcohol, and Nicotine
- Try Relaxation Techniques
- Talk to Someone
- Keep a Stress Diary
- Take Control
- Learn to Say 'No'

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