

WORKPLACE STRESS

TOO MUCH STRESS CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH AND ABILITY TO WORK SAFELY

Stress is the result of any emotional, physical, social, economic, or other factor that requires an individual to respond or change. Workplace stress can be caused by many factors, such as shiftwork, role ambiguity and lack of autonomy.

IMPACT

Physical symptoms of excessive stress include headaches, high blood pressure, digestive upset, muscle tension, sweating, shaking, heart irregularities, insomnia, fatigue and frequent illness.

Stress can also cause people to over-medicate, smoke or drink excessively. It is common for stress to cause feelings of depression, anxiety, nervousness, anger and recklessness (often due to a sense of unfairness or injustice).

Stress can contribute to injuries by causing people to:

- become momentarily, but dangerously, distracted
- make errors in judgment
- put their bodies under physical stress, increasing the potential for strains and sprains
- fail in normal activities that require hand-eye or foot-eye coordination.

TIPS FOR MANAGING STRESS

- Take ten minutes at the start of each day to prioritize and organize your day.
- Be honest with your colleagues, but be constructive and make practical suggestions.
- Be realistic about what you can change.
- Do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form.
- Do one thing at a time.
- Speak up if you do not have the training, skills or resources that you need.
- Talk with somebody you trust.
- Take several deep breaths throughout the day and have regular stretch breaks.
- Give yourself permission to take a break from your worries and concerns each day.
- Make a point to recall positive emotional moments.
- Laugh!

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

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