

Health *capsule*

Working on Workplace Stress

Deadlines looming, a full in-box, personality clashes, customers breathing down your neck... Any one of these situations could be enough to raise your blood pressure and, of course, your stress levels.

And while a little stress has been shown to actually improve performance and motivate, too much of it can do the opposite. Excessive job stress can stop you in your tracks, leave you feeling exhausted and unable to effectively deal with day-to-day responsibilities.

While it's impossible to completely free yourself from workplace stress, the information below will help you understand what it is, why it happens and what steps you can take to better control it.

Positive vs. Negative Stress

Positive stress can drive people to do their best and sometimes, most productive work. As a matter of fact, when people seek out opportunities that encourage them to reach higher and do better, it's often the effects of positive stress that helps them rise to the challenge.

Negative stress on the other hand, can be physically and emotionally harmful. It not only slows progress, but can also block it out entirely. It surfaces when a person experiences a negative physical or emotional response to a perceived conflict between the demands of the job, and the amount of control that he or she feels over meeting those demands.

Emotional Stress Signals

- 📌 Feeling helpless
- 📌 Over-reaction to seemingly small issues
- 📌 Being overly self-critical
- 📌 Trouble concentrating on tasks
- 📌 Extreme negativity
- 📌 Feeling overwhelmed or not 'knowing where to start'
- 📌 Depression

Physical Signals

- 📌 Difficulty sleeping
- 📌 Feeling run down or exhausted
- 📌 Memory loss
- 📌 Headaches
- 📌 Frequent colds or flu
- 📌 Insomnia
- 📌 Shortness of breath
- 📌 Sudden weight loss or gain



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Stress Soothers

‡ **Before stress can be reduced it must be identified.** Are you dragging stress from home to your work or vice versa? Is your stress caused by unrealistic demands from others? By your own expectations? Taking good honest stock of your stress and how it relates to your job is the first critical step to depressurizing the situation.

‡ **Accept change.** Acknowledge the possibility that your workday may not unfold as you imagined. Uncertainties and change are not necessarily a negative part of your day; they simply require the application of different strategies.

‡ **Clean up your surroundings.** Having trouble finding your phone under all the files on your desk? Make an effort to rid your workspace of annoyances that can clutter your mind and 'up' your stress levels. Re-organize your office to make information more accessible and free up additional space in your work area. Improving your physical environment can take the wind out of stress' sails.

‡ **Move it or gain it!** Physical activity isn't just good for the waistline: regular exercise is one of the easiest and most effective ways to rid the body of stress' grip. Several studies show that exercise boosts your brain's production of natural mood lifters and spurs on the release of neurotransmitters, which help you keep your mental and physical cool. And you don't have to be a slave to the treadmill to benefit. Whether it's a stroll at lunch, a yoga class after work, or ice-skating with the kids, the effects are the same: improved mental and physical function and a more optimistic outlook.

(Source : www.shepellfgi.com)

Did you know that...?

The month of **October** is the **Breast Cancer Awareness month**. The **Canadian Cancer Society** encourages you to take a few minutes to learn how to reduce your risk of cancer.

Step 1: Be a non-smoker and avoid second-hand smoke.

Step 2: Eat 5 to 10 servings of vegetables and fruit a day. Choose high fibre, lower fat foods.

Step 3: Be physically active on a regular basis: this will also help you maintain a healthy body weight.

Step 4: Protect yourself from the sun.

Step 5: Follow cancer screening guidelines.

Step 6: Visit your doctor if you notice any change in your normal state of health.

Step 7: Follow health and safety instructions at home and at work when using, storing and disposing of hazardous materials.

For more information, please visit the following **Websites:**

Canadian Cancer Society: www.cancer.ca

Cancer View Canada: www.cancerview.ca

Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation:
www.cbcf.org

Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation:
www.rubanrose.org

CURE Foundation: www.curefoundation.com

(Source: www.cancer.ca)



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