

HEALTH AWARENESS



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JOB STRESS: A MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN



Workplace stress, or job stress, is the physiological condition in which work-related duties and responsibilities become burdensome and overwhelming to the point that they impose unhealthy effects on the mental and physical wellness of employees. In fact, The American Institute of Stress reports 120,000 people die every year as a direct result of work-related stress.

DIGGING DEEPER

According to the [U.S. Department of Labor \(USDL\)](#), job stress can lead to loneliness, isolation, uncertainty, grief, and fear. This negative impact can be harmful to one's health and may affect job performance and productivity, as well as one's engagement with others at work.

"The workplace is often a breeding ground for stressful situations because of the relatively high expectations and priorities assigned by employers," states

[workplacetesting.com](#). "The clash of multiple personality types between employees and the fear of losing a source of income can also factor into creating job stress."

It's a serious physiological condition that can cause adverse mental and physical reactions to the body because of excessive workplace obligations. In the last decade, cases of job stress have increased. [The State of the Global Workplace: 2022](#) reports that worldwide, more than 44% of workers say that they have a problem with daily stress at work. That's a record high and up slightly from 43% in 2020.

REASONS FOR JOB STRESS

There are several concerns that lead to job stress. Examples from the USDL include:

- Concerns about job security
- Lack of access to the correct equipment

(Article is continued on reverse side.)

- Fear of employer retaliation or confrontation with others
- Taking on more responsibilities
- Having to work extended shifts without adequate breaks
- Dealing with technical difficulties
- Blurring work and life boundaries
- Concerns about work performance and productivity
- Concerns about transportation

BY THE NUMBERS

Nearly one in five U.S. adults live with a mental illness according to the National Institute of Mental Health, a number that's only growing. With that in mind, approximately 65% of U.S. workers surveyed have characterized work as being a very significant or somewhat significant source of stress in each year from 2019 to 2021.

According to the World Health Organization, 83% of U.S. workers suffer from work-related stress while 54% of workers report that work stress affects their home life. The previously mentioned State of the Global Workplace study found that among workers surveyed, 60% report feeling "emotionally detached" while at work, and 19% consistently feel "miserable." This is concerning, since the average person will spend 90,000 hours of their life working, or simply put, a third of their life on average.

THE SOLUTION?

The solution is that there is no simple solution, but there are a variety of ways to combat work stress.

One answer is to be aware. Acknowledge that any one person can carry an emotional load that is unique to his/her own circumstance. With so many different factors playing into job stress, it's worth the time to identify a specific area that causes stress. By being aware and identifying the area, one can begin working towards a solution.

Another solution is to escape the "recovery paradox" a psychologist tells [Knowable Magazine](#). The odds are high that when a job is stressful, it's difficult to have an excellent recovery. One key is to up the quality of your free time, like developing new skills or devoting

BENEFITS CORNER

WELCOMING A NEW YEAR

With the new year, it is important to confirm your current providers are still in your network, including medical, dental, and vision providers. On that note, if you go to a medical or dental appointment, make sure you are taking your new ID card – especially if you made a change – as the group number will be different.



There has been an insurance card delay, in part because the Department of Insurance (DOI) has made changes to all Medical ID cards to show copays and deductible amounts on the actual card. If you have yet to receive a card, please speak with our benefits team at CTSI to provide PDF copies.

oneself to a cause. The same article states that people who achieved some sort of mastery over a hobby during their off-time were more energetic and enthusiastic.

Next is the practice known as detachment. Easier said than done, detachment is the practice of tuning out work when off the clock. This can create a powerful boundary between work and social life, thus leading to less fatigue. Sometimes detachment is as simple as having a separate work phone and a personal cell-phone rather than both together. Sometimes it's the difficult practice of distracting the mind with home life and hobbies instead of thinking about work.

Finally, consider seeking help from a healthcare professional who specializes in mental health. According to the [National Alliance of Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#), "A trustworthy and knowledgeable mental health professional will be a valuable ally. It may take a little time and persistence to locate this ally or assemble a team of allies." Begin by thinking about what you're looking for in a healthcare professional, gather referrals, make the call, ask questions, and build a relationship.