

safety matters

From your safety partners at Peabody Insurance Agency

Dealing with Stress on the Job

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports that 25 percent of workers feel that their jobs are the number one stressor in their lives. They also found that work-related stress is more highly correlated with health issues than family and financial problems.

When overwhelming challenges at work turn enjoyment and satisfaction into exhaustion and frustration, it can lead to illness, injury and job failure.

Causes of Stress

Though every individual reacts to situations differently, there are several instances that can trigger undue stress at work:

- Uncontrollable issues that arise
- Heavy workload
- Pressure to perform at above normal levels
- Job insecurity
- Long work hours
- Excessive travel
- Office politics
- Conflicts with co-workers
- Work and family balance

Since these triggers occur frequently, it is wise to look out for early signs of stress and resolve to take steps to reduce it.

As symptoms emerge, they can develop into more serious health complications such as depression, anxiety and even heart conditions. Be wary of the following warning signs:

- Insomnia
- Low morale
- Short temper
- Headache
- Upset stomach
- Extremely sore back
- Job dissatisfaction
- Difficulty concentrating

Stress-Reducing Activities

To reduce stress on the job and your risk of developing a more serious health condition, consider these recommendations:

- **Plan Ahead**
 - Start working on tasks well before they are due and always have an alternative plan in case something falls through.
- **Prioritize Your Work**
 - Create a list of tasks that must get done and then break them down into smaller, more manageable assignments so you do not get overwhelmed.

If you feel particularly stressed, take a break. Seek the advice of a co-worker, step outside or go get a cup of coffee and get away from the stressor for a few moments. This may help you gain a fresh perspective.



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- **Slow Down**

- Think before you act to avoid having to repeat tasks.

- **Use Resources**

- Ask co-workers for assistance with jobs you cannot feasibly tackle on your own.

- **Balance Your Life**

- Make sure there is an even focus on work and family life to offset work stressors with fun family or friend activities.

- **Resolve Conflicts**

- Develop a conflict resolution plan to solve interpersonal problems with co-workers.