

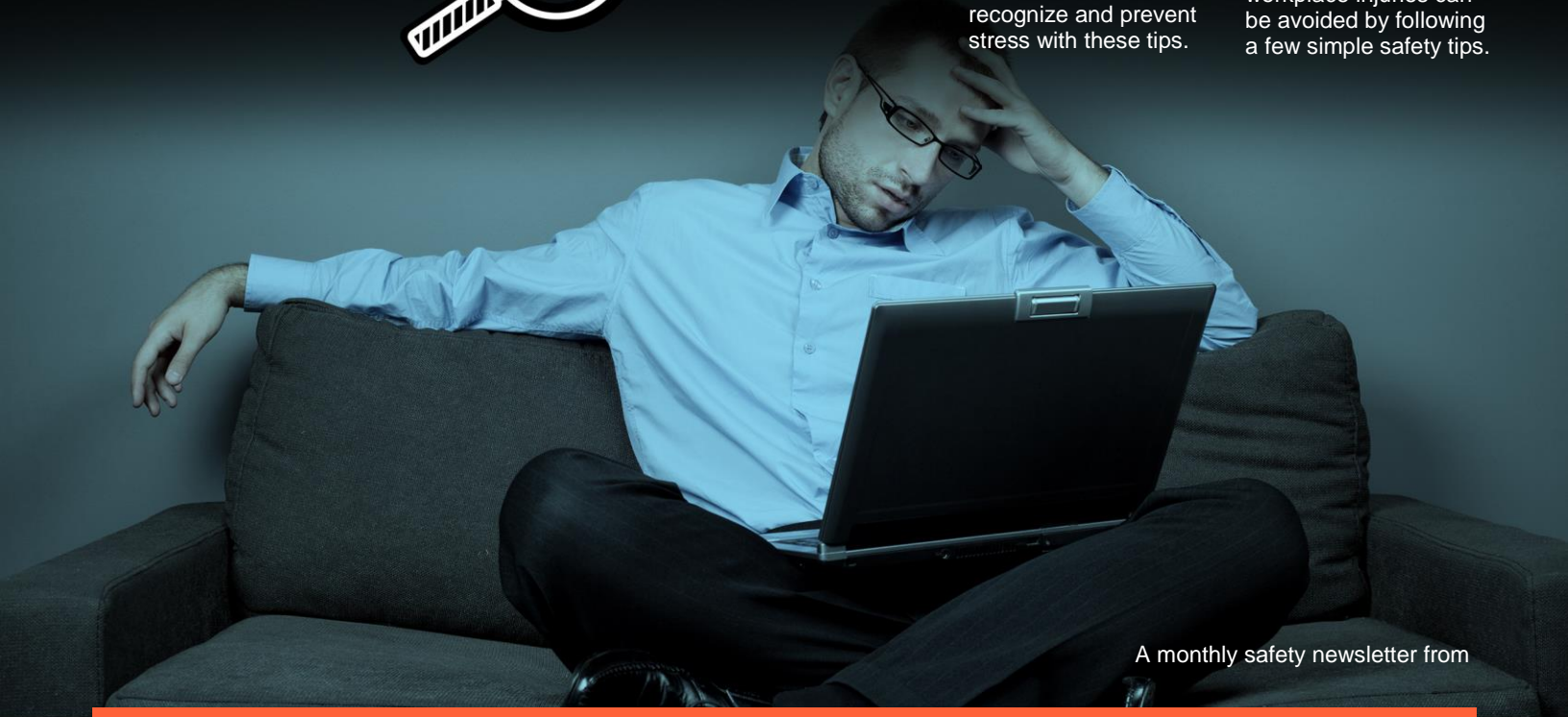


Managing Your Workplace Stress

Stress levels are rising in workplaces around the world. Learn how to recognize and prevent stress with these tips.

Avoid These 4 Common Workplace Injuries

Many common workplace injuries can be avoided by following a few simple safety tips.



A monthly safety newsletter from

Managing Your Workplace Stress

Although dealing with stress is a normal part of everyday life, it is important to be on the lookout for some of the early warning signs of unhealthy stress. These early symptoms include depression, anxiety, insomnia and headaches.

Additionally, it is important to avoid the stigmas of mental disorders, and to realize that stress is not a weakness, not your fault, and can affect anyone at any time. And, although many who suffer from stress choose to keep it to themselves, you don't need to suffer in silence. Instead, you can alleviate your stress by speaking with a friend, your doctor or a support service.

Pressures of long working hours and low job security can be felt in many workplaces. However, is committed to ensuring all our employees are healthy and stress-free. You can manage workplace stress in the following ways:

- **Realize that it is OK to sometimes say no.** While always saying yes can make you look like a go-getter in the short term, taking on too much can set you up for failure and increase your stress levels.

- **Learn to speak up.** You can prevent stress and exhaustion by knowing how much work you're able to take on. If you take on too much, you won't be able to do it well, so choose wisely. If you're unable to reasonably complete a project, your manager will most likely appreciate it if you outline your reasons and offer an alternate solution.
- **Recognize when you're stressed.** One of the best things to do about workplace stress is simply recognize it exists. Then you can do something about it before it interferes with other aspects of your life.
- **Slow down.** Think things through before you act, and begin with a clear goal in mind. This way, you'll avoid having to start over halfway through a misguided project.
- **Take a break.** To relieve stress, make time to take a break. Taking a walk or discussing your work situation with another person may help you gain a new outlook.

According to Northwestern National Life, 40 percent of employees report that their job is very or extremely stressful.



BALDWIN
KRISTYN SHERMAN

Avoid These 4 Common Workplace Injuries

Research indicates that the most common workplace injuries across all industries are repetitive strain injuries (RSIs), falls, overexertion and road accidents. Thankfully, such injuries can be avoided by following a few simple steps:

- **RSIs:** To avoid RSIs, make sure your desk and chair are adjusted so that there is sufficient lumbar support. This helps prevent back pain. Also, make sure your wrists are pointing straight forward and are in alignment with your forearms to prevent wrist pain.
- **Falls:** Although it may be difficult to completely prevent trips and falls, there are a few things you can do to minimize the risk. For example, ensure that floors are clear of obstructions, and clean up spills quickly.

If you work on ladders, scaffolding or rooftops, make sure you understand the risks of working at a height, and request health and safety training if you haven't received it.

- **Overexertion:** Pushing, pulling and any other type of movement that may cause

overexertion is usually associated with employees who handle heavy loads at work. Before handling something heavy, assess whether you may need help from other employees. Don't try and move heavy loads on your own.

When you move something large and heavy, ensure that your body is positioned properly, with your hands and feet at a shoulder-width distance apart. Use gradual force when pushing or lifting something to avoid back strain. Lift with your legs, not your back.

- **Road accidents:** If you drive as part of your job, you can prevent injuries and fatalities on the road by reviewing 's safe driving policy and completing road safety training. Doing so can ensure that you are fully aware of the best practices when it comes to road safety and know what to do in an emergency.

If you notice anything that could pose as a potential workplace hazard, please report it to your manager immediately so it can be addressed promptly.



Safety in NUMBERS 123

Work-related stress can produce the following negative effects:



Anxiety and depression



Loss of memory



Substance abuse



Headaches

Real-life Case Study

Kristen worked as an executive assistant for the CEO of a large Chicago firm. Kristen was good at her job and often spent long hours at work in order to complete her tasks. She never spoke up or said that something was not possible out of fear that it would make her look incapable.

Eventually, Kristen began to feel stressed. The extra hours spent at work took time away from her family, and she began to struggle in her personal life. Although she told everyone she was fine, it was noticeable that she was not OK. Her health started to suffer, and one bout of illness forced her to miss an entire week of work, which led to even more stress about how she was going to complete the work asked of her.

During a conversation with a good friend, Kristen recognized that she needed to do something about the stresses of her job, so she initiated a conversation with her boss. She had no idea Kristen was having difficulties. Her boss didn't want to lose Kristen, and she appreciated her honesty. As a result, they both vowed to communicate better going forward, and to prioritize Kristen's workload more efficiently.