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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: JOB STRESS

Forty percent of workers report that their job is “very or extremely stressful.” – Northwestern National Life

Many people encounter stress on a day-to-day basis. It is sometimes important to feel stress, but when there is too much stress, it can cause physical and mental health problems.

Stress prepares the body for action, and if the body is always in this state there can be negative consequences. Some examples of stress related health problems are:

- Sleep disturbances
- Upset stomach
- Headaches
- Cardiovascular disease
- Back pain
- Psychological disorders

Job stress is defined as harmful physical or emotional responses when job requirements do not match job resources or worker needs. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.

Job conditions that may lead to stress:

- **The nature of the task** – do you have a heavy workload, long working hours without



breaks, or feel as though you have very little sense of control?

- **Management style** – lack of understanding and poor communication by your supervisors.
- **Interpersonal relationships** – having a poor social environment at work and lack of support or help from those you work with.
- **Work roles** – too much responsibility or conflicting job expectations.
- **Career concerns** – job insecurity or lacking an opportunity to grow and advance within the job.

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Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.

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- Environmental conditions – dangerous physical conditions such as too much noise or air pollution.

Some signs that you may be having job stress are:

- Headaches
- Sleep disturbances
- Difficulty concentrating
- Short temper
- Upset stomach

If you have one or more of these signs, you should talk to your health care provider about these symptoms.

Cures for Some Stressful Job Situations

If you have job stress, here are a few tips you might be able to use to help relieve some of that stress.

***Did you know:
U.S. workers
put in more
hours on the
job than the
labor force
of any other
industrial
nation?***

- If overwork is your problem — take a vacation, leave work on time as often as possible, and avoid taking work home.
- If you're worried about layoffs — make sure you're prepared should that happen.
- If you find that you made the wrong career choice, or your career is no longer fulfilling — it may be time for a change.
- If you are having conflicts with your boss or co-workers — try to work them out. Although it may be difficult, you can try to figure out a way to get along better.

How much job stress do you have?

Enter a number on a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being “strongly disagree” and 10 being “strongly agree”:

- ___ I can't honestly say what I really think or get things off my chest at work.
- ___ My job has a lot of responsibility, but I don't have very much authority.
- ___ I could usually do a much better job if I were given more time.
- ___ I seldom receive adequate acknowledgment or appreciation when my work is really good.
- ___ In general, I am not particularly proud or satisfied with my job.
- ___ I have the impression that I am repeatedly picked on or discriminated against at work.
- ___ My workplace environment is not very pleasant or particularly safe.
- ___ My job often interferes with my family and social obligations or personal needs.
- ___ I tend to have frequent arguments with superiors, coworkers, or customers.
- ___ Most of the time I feel that I have very little control over my life at work.

Add up the replies to each question for your total job stress score.

If you score between 10 and 30, you handle stress on your job well; between 40 and 60, moderately well; 70 and 100, you're encountering problems that need to be addressed and resolved.

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