

TOOLBOX TALK #4

STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, stress levels among many workers have been through the roof. Studies have shown that between caregiving duties, job responsibilities and more, employees are feeling overwhelmed. And stress has been linked to health conditions such as cardiovascular issues, depression and obesity.

Everyone experiences stress from time to time. If you take practical steps to manage your stress, you may reduce the risk of negative health effects.

Tips include:

- Recognize the signs of your body's response to stress. This can include difficulty sleeping, increased alcohol and other substance use, being easily angered, feeling depressed, and having low energy.
- Try exercising. Just 30 minutes a day of walking can help boost your mood and improve your health.
- Explore meditation, muscle relaxation or breathing exercises. Set aside time in your daily schedule for these and other relaxing activities.
- Learn to say "no" to new tasks if you feel like you're taking on too much. Decide on what must get done now and what can wait.
- Know that you're not alone. Keep in touch with people that can provide emotional support and practical help. To reduce stress, ask for help from friends, family or religious organizations.
- Ask for help. If you're overwhelmed by stress, ask for help from a health professional. You should seek help right away if you have suicidal thoughts, are overwhelmed, feel you cannot cope, or are using drugs or alcohol more frequently as a result of stress.

