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# WIC Worksite Wellness Newsletter



## It's Summer!

### Time to Make Sure to Minimize Stress!

**Are you longing for a summer vacation to escape the stress of daily life? If so, you're in good company. According to a report by the American Psychological Association, most working Americans report feeling stressed. Stress can manifest itself in multiple forms, and in the long term it can take a significant toll on your overall health. Don't stress. It's not all bad news. Researchers recommend a variety of strategies to help identify and reduce stress.**

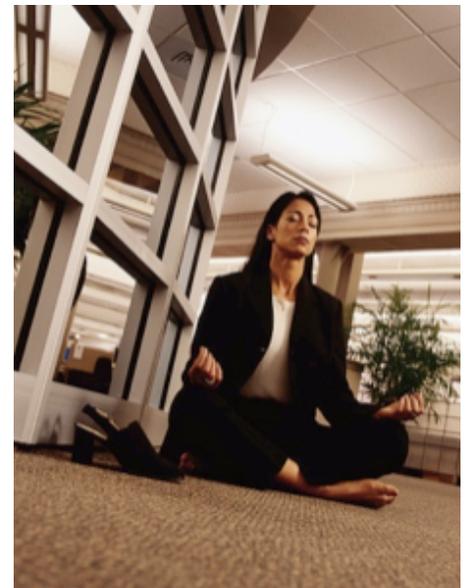
**Signs of Stress:** We all react differently to stress. Some people eat too much or eat unhealthy foods. Others experience a range of emotions such as anger, anxiety, depression or sadness. Close to half (47%) of Americans experience insomnia as a result of stress. Women more frequently than men report that their stress manifests in the form of upset stomach, muscular tension, and appetite changes.

**Health effects:** In addition to the emotional impacts of stress, psychological stress can take a serious toll on your physical health. While work environments can be a source of stress, strategies can also be adopted to minimize workplace stress. Studies have shown that stressful work dynamics like work overload, poor support, and low input on decision

making have been associated with negative health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease. Furthermore, job related demands have been linked to weight status in women. But worksite wellness programs can help reduce worksite stress and contribute to employees' overall health.

**Individual stress management:** Much of the research on stress reduction focuses on individual strategies, which highlight short term solutions. Helpful techniques to deal with daily, personal pressures include relaxation, meditation, exercise, and time management.

**Improving work environments:** Focusing on changes in the work environment can provide an effective and lasting framework to reduce workplace stress.



Examples of strategies that have been effective include co-worker support groups, role clarification processes, and programs that allow all employees to participate in some degree of decision making.

### For more on this topic:

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## Stress Management Techniques

### What You Can Do on Your Own:

1. Find health-promoting activities that help you manage stress.
2. Exercise regularly. Consider taking a walk when you feel stressed.
3. Eat a healthy diet.
4. Get enough sleep.
5. Practice relaxation, meditation, or simple deep breathing.
6. Remember to avoid alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs.

### Tips for Your Agency's Wellness Program:

1. At your next staff meeting, find time to discuss workplace strategies for reducing and managing stress.
2. Offer a stress management training at your agency!
3. Consider potential workplace sources of stress and ways to relieve them.

## SEND US YOUR IDEAS & QUESTIONS



We want to know what worksite wellness ideas are working for your agency. We also want to hear your questions and concerns about implementing worksite wellness. Share your agency's successes and/or questions by emailing us at:

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