

Recognizing and Preventing Burnout in Yourself and Others

Defining burnout

- Burnout is the mental, emotional, or physical condition of chronic exhaustion that occurs due to prolonged stress¹⁻³
- The 3 dimensions of burnout are⁴:



1. Exhaustion

The result of the stress that drains our emotional and physical resources



3. Inefficiency

The result of a loss of confidence, feelings of ineffectiveness, and a lack of achievement and productivity at work or in your personal life. This produces low morale and an inability to cope



2. Cynicism

The result of an overload of exhaustion that leads to loss of enthusiasm and passion for work, and ultimately a detachment from work

Signs and symptoms of burnout⁵⁻⁷

Behaviors



Being frequently sick



Losing interest in activities



Having a poor work-life balance



Changing sleep patterns

Emotions

Chronic emotional and physical fatigue

Lack of appropriate emotions

Depersonalization

Insensitivity

Cynicism

Depression

Irritability

Suggestions on practicing self-care to reduce stress and prevent burnout^{8,9}

- Make restorative sleep a priority – eliminate distractions like using your telephone in bed
- Commit some time to yourself – even if it's only 15 minutes a day
- Maintain adequate nutrition and hydration – don't forget to take a lunch break
- Participate in physical activities – walk, run, bike, practice yoga, swim, skate
- Confide in a mental health professional – use the employee assistance program at your workplace¹⁰
- Share your emotions with a trusted colleague – they may be going through the same issues
- Maintain healthy relationships with your close friends and family – rely on the people you trust¹¹
- Participate in spiritual or religious practices to reduce stress – find what works for you^{11,12}

Recommendations to help others deal with burnout¹⁰

- Talk to them and make sure they are safe
- Be there to provide support that is free from judgment
- Help them find a good support system and encourage them to seek the help they need
- Check in periodically with the person to make sure they're okay

Additional resources:

- Managing fatigue during times of crisis: guidance for nurses, managers, and other health care workers
- Tips for health care professionals: coping with stress and compassion fatigue
- Top tips from nurses on dealing with burnout



References

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