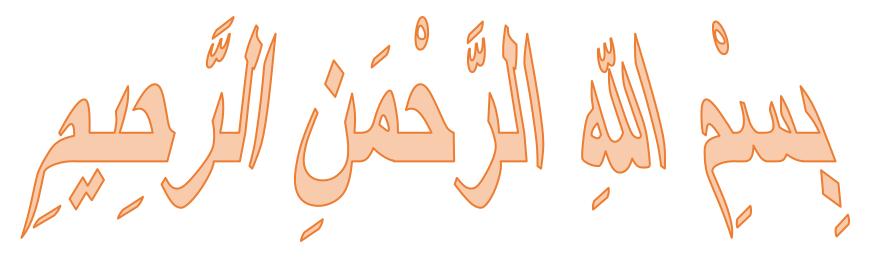
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH



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Work related stress 2

Stress-related hazards at work

- ☐ Stress related <u>hazards</u> at work can <u>be divided into</u>:
- A. Work content.
- B. Work context.

A. Work content includes:

1.Job content:

- √ monotony
- ✓ under-stimulation
- √ meaningless of tasks
- ✓ lack of variety, etc.

2. Work load and work pace لريقة السير

- √too much or too little to do,
- ✓ work under time pressure, etc

3.Working hours:

- strict or inflexible,
- long and unsocial,
- unpredictable,
- badly designed shift systems.

4.Participation and control:

- lack of participation in decision-making,
- lack of control over work processes, pace, hours, methods, and the work environment

II Work context

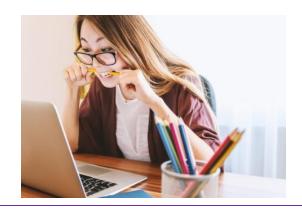
B- Work context includes:

1. Career development, status and pay:

- ✓ job insecurity
- **✓ lack of promotion opportunities**
- ✓ under- or over-promotion
- √ work of 'low social value
- ✓ piece rate payment schemes
- ✓ unclear or unfair performance evaluation systems
- √ being over- or under-skilled for a job

2. Interpersonal relationships:

- inadequate, inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision
- poor relationships with colleagues
- harassment and violence,
- isolate or solitary work, etc



3. Role in the organization:

unclear role, conflicting roles.

4. Organizational culture:

- poor communication,
- poor leadership,
- lack of behavioral rule,
- lack of clarity about organizational objectives, structures and strategies.



- Conflicting demands of work & home,
- lack of support for domestic problems at work,
- lack of support for work problems at home,
- lack of organizational rules and policies to support work-life balance



Consequences of work-related stress

- 1. Physiological reactions
- 2. Emotional reactions
- 3. Cognitive reactions
- 4. Behavioural Reactions
- 5. Long-term risks
- 6. Mental and physical disorders

1. Physiological reactions to stress:

- increasing heart rate
- increasing blood pressure
- increasing muscle tension
- sweating
- increased adrenaline production and secretion,



Consequences of work-related stress Cont....

2. Emotional reactions may include:

Physiological reactions
Emotional reactions
Cognitive reactions
Behavioural Reactions
Long-term risks
Mental and physical disorders

- fear
- irritation
- depressive mood
- anxiety
- anger
- diminished motivation

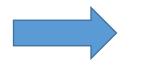
3. Cognitive reactions may include

- Decreased attention
- Narrowing of perception
- Forgetfulness
- less effective thinking
- less problem solving,
- Reduced learning ability

4. Behavioural Reactions may include:

- Decreasing Productivity
- Increasing Smoking
- Increasing drug use and / Or Alcohol consumption
- Making Errors,
- Reporting Sick





Consequences of work-related stress Cont....

5. Long-term risks of reduced health and Disease for the worker expressed in :

- ➤ high blood pressure
- > angina complaints
- > burnout and affective disorders الإرهاق والاضطرابات العطفية
- **≻**depression
- disturbed metabolism (risk of Type II diabetes)
- >alcohol dependence,
- > musculoskeletal disorders
- 6. When exposure to stress does not decrease and continues over prolonged periods, workers do not have enough time to recover.
- Stress may eventually cause mental and physical disorders
- and impair the immune system, resulting in
- sickness and absence from work and work disability

Physiological reactions
Emotional reactions
Cognitive reactions
Behavioural Reactions
Long-term risks
Mental and physical disorders



Managing Work-related Stress

Employees are less likely to experience work-related stress when

- A. Demands and pressures of work are matched to their knowledge and abilities.
- B. Control can be exercised over their work and the way they do it.
- C. Support is received from supervisors and colleagues.
- **D. Participation** in **decisions** that **concern their jobs** is provided.

Managing Work-related Stress:

- A. Actions and solutions should primarily focus on changes in the organizational culture and the organization of work
 - B. Improving workers' individual abilities, skills and coping capacity through training and education_____

- A. Actions and solutions should primarily focus on change in the <u>organizational culture</u> and the <u>organization of work</u>, such as:
- 1. Redistributing work among colleagues,
- 2. Introducing job rotation (moving to a number of different tasks usually according to a rotation plan),
- 3. Introducing job enlargement (adding more tasks of the same difficulty),
- 4.Introducing job enrichment (adding more difficult tasks),
- 5.Improving managerial ability (e.g by management skills training)
- **6.Ergonomic improvements** in the work place
- 7.Improving working schedules and working and resting times

(for example forward or backward rotation of shifts)

Actions focus on organization culture and work, Cont. ..

- 8.Implementing direct worker consultation at work,
- 9.Improving communication between groups of workers, or between the client and the workers, and between workers and supervisors,
- 10. Providing clear job descriptions or tasks,
- 11. Providing clear job promotion rules and paths.

Note: The advantage of this approach is that:

- ☐ it deals directly with the causes of stress in the work environment,
 - may have a **positive effect** on the **total workforce** of a company.



- B. Improving workers' individual abilities, skills and coping capacity through training and education, such as courses in:
- 1. Time management,
- 2. Dealing with aggressive customers,
- 3. Lifting heavy goods,
- 4. Using appropriate machines or equipment,
- 5. **stress management**, and training,



Note:

This individual-focused approach has two <u>disadvantages</u> when there are major problems in the work place:

1. The beneficial effects on stress symptoms are often short lived;



- 1. The beneficial effects on stress symptoms are often short lived;
- 2. Important causes of stress in the work environment are ignored and will continue to cause work stress.

As a general rule, organizational strategies to prevent workrelated stress should be given top priority.

However, even the **most** Reliable **efforts to improve working conditions** are **unlikely to eliminate stress completely** for all workers.

For this reason, <u>a combination</u> of the <u>organizational</u> and <u>individual approach is often the most useful</u> way to <u>prevent</u> work-related stress while staying focused on organizational and work-organizational measures.

MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS:

The occupational health service, professional psychologists or professionals with a related expertise, If they are available, can advise the employer about prevention measures or interventions which are best indicated for the identified risk situations.

MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS: Examples:

Problems:	Possible actions:
High workload	 Redistribution of work among colleagues Prioritize work/tasks Offer a training course (e.g. on stress or time management)
Monotonous and routine work	 Make sure that where possible workers have some control over work pace Make sure there are enough breaks Job rotation (moving to a number of different tasks usually according to a rotation plan) Job enlargement (add more tasks of same difficulty) Job enrichment (add more difficult tasks) Where necessary, offer additional training or education

Box 7: Examples of actions to prevent work-related stress

Problems:	Possible actions:
Physical risks at the work place	 Replace the risk producing machines or devices by others that produce less risk Shield the source of risk (noise or other) Inform workers about the negative effects of exposure to these risks Offer workers personal protection devices (ear plugs, hand cuffs to protect them from hot surfaces etc.)
Conflicting or unclear tasks or roles	Make a clear job description with clear and appropriate demands
Insufficient work experience for the job	 Provide suitable training where necessary Appoint a personal mentor at work Offer help and encourage help from colleagues Leave more difficult tasks to other more experienced colleagues

Box 7: Examples of actions to prevent work-related stress

Problems:	Possible actions:
Lack of social support from manager and/or colleagues	 Offer managers training to learn how to treat their workers Arrange regular team building activities (dinner after work, team excursions, or other social activities) Have lunch and coffee breaks together Stimulate and reward team work Arrange regular meetings in which work problems can be discussed and solved (together)
Work-home interface	 Support or provide child care facilities Flexible working times, such as temporary and/or part-time work Teleworking/working from home Address the needs of the family, children in addition to care for the worker Provide worker transportation when needed



