

GEISINGER HEALTH PLAN

Member Update

Spring 2022



Geisinger

Burnout (and what you can do about it)

Feeling overworked? Burnout due to chronic stress can lead to physical and mental symptoms much like those of anxiety and depression. The good news: You can take steps to start feeling better.

Researchers say some personality types are more susceptible to feeling overworked, like high achievers. Telltale symptoms of burnout include:

- Mental and physical exhaustion
- Lack of motivation
- Physical illness
- Cynicism
- Feeling ineffective
- Decreased performance and/or creativity
- Irritability
- Isolation from coworkers, family and friends

What causes burnout?

It doesn't matter where you work — anyone can have work-related stress. Check in with yourself. How are you feeling? Have you noticed changes in your behavior? Can you laugh and enjoy yourself? Do you get enough sleep, or are you thinking about work much of the night?

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What you can do to start feeling better

Just like feeling burned out doesn't happen overnight, getting back to good takes time. But you can start with a few of these suggestions.

Reach out – Talk to a supervisor or your human resources department. It could be a good start to a healthier work environment. Not an option? Talking to a trusted friend or family member, or writing in a journal can provide relief.

Take care of physical needs – Sometimes you have to go back to the basics. A healthy lifestyle is a solid foundation for keeping stress at bay.

- **Eat a balanced diet:** Fueling your body with the proper nutrition can help keep your mood in check.
- **Make movement a priority:** Exercise releases tension, increases blood flow to the brain and produces feel-good endorphins.
- **Sleep your best:** Getting enough Zzz's leads to better thinking, learning and memory. Aim for seven to eight hours a night.

Take breaks – Whether you're on the front lines or sitting at your laptop at home, give yourself a rest every so often. Stepping away, getting some fresh air or stretching gives your mind a breather. Schedule breaks so you remember to get away.

Keep work and home life in balance – Don't let a demanding job take a toll on life. Commit to a regular time to shut down. If you must answer a few emails after hours, choose a reasonable time to put the computer away, whether you've responded to each one or not.

Practice self-compassion – No one's perfect. Treat yourself like you would a loved one going through the same thing. Inner voice sounding overly critical? Remind it that you're doing the best you can. Pay attention to what you've accomplished each day, not to what you haven't.

It's OK not to be OK

If you're still feeling burned out, talk to a mental health professional. They can help you find ways to start feeling better.



Spring-clean your health

With the warmer weather comes the chore of spring cleaning. It's time to open the windows and shake off the cobwebs of winter. But rather than thinking of it as a huge undertaking, consider it a chance to boost your mental and physical wellness.

A clean house not only improves your mood and makes you feel more productive, it also helps your immune system by removing dust, mold and mildew. Washing curtains, airing out pillows and scrubbing floors rid your home of allergens. Clearing out clutter — whether by cleaning, organizing or donating — helps you feel more in control. Tidying up your bedroom can even help you sleep better.

Spring cleaning's not just for your house. Get outside for the benefits of fresh air and sunshine while cleaning up the yard. Do some gardening, if that's your thing. Plant cheerful, colorful flowers for a terrific mood-booster. Clearing winter debris, like pinecones, dead sticks and branches, gives you exercise at the same time.

And all those dandelions springing up in the lawn? Instead of using weed killer, remove the green leaves (the sooner after they come out, the better) and use them in place of kale, chard or similar greens. Yes, you can eat dandelion greens — and they're good for you! They have an earthy, slightly bitter taste like endive or arugula. Sauté them with a little garlic and lemon juice or put them in salads and soups. Two birds, one stone: You've de-weeded the yard and snagged some healthy food at the same time.

While you're in the spring-cleaning frame of mind, it's a good reminder to schedule a well visit with your family doctor or healthcare provider if you haven't had one in a while. Now you can enjoy the upcoming summer knowing you've improved your health and well-being this spring!

5 things to know about Pap smears

A Pap smear (or Pap test) is a screening that checks for changes in your cells that could develop into cervical cancer.

During the procedure, your healthcare provider gently scrapes cells from your cervix and examines them. They may also do a test for human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection that can cause cervical cancer. While these two screenings can be a little uncomfortable, they should never cause pain.



What to know about this simple, lifesaving screening.

1. **Most women should have a Pap smear every three to five years, starting at age 21.** Your healthcare provider will also begin testing you for HPV starting at age 30. If your Pap and HPV screenings are negative, the interval can be extended to five years.

You may need more frequent testing if you've had abnormal test results in the past. And if you're over age 65, you may be able to stop getting Pap smears altogether. Talk to your healthcare provider to see what's right for you.

2. **Whether you're sexually active or not, you still need a Pap smear.** Most cervical cancers are caused by HPV, which is sexually transmitted. But because not all are, Pap tests are necessary whether you're sexually active or not.

3. **Pap smears don't screen for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).** They test for any abnormal cell changes in your cervix, which could lead to cervical cancer. But they won't find HPV or other STIs, like gonorrhea or chlamydia. If you want added testing for STIs, ask your provider during your visit.

4. **A Pap smear is different from a pelvic exam. And yes, you need both.**

- A pelvic exam is usually done at your annual well visit with your healthcare provider. During this exam, they'll check your vulva, vagina, cervix, ovaries, uterus, rectum and pelvis for any abnormalities.
- A Pap smear specifically screens for precancerous changes. If you're due for one, you can get a Pap smear during your annual pelvic exam.

5. **You may want to reschedule your Pap smear if you're on your period.** Technically, you can get a Pap smear while having your period, but a heavy flow may affect the results of your screening. Talk with your healthcare provider if you're on your period to decide if you should reschedule.

Cervical cancer is preventable. Having regular Pap tests is the best way to catch it. So remind your relatives and friends — or anyone else in your life at risk of cervical cancer — to schedule their appointment (especially if it's been a few years).

Ready for a healthy change?

If you're thinking about quitting smoking, getting fit or losing weight, you can get support and education by signing up for these programs.

Freedom From Smoking® – Find out if you're really ready to quit, and learn about;

- Medications that can help you succeed
- Lifestyle changes to make quitting easier
- How to prepare for quit day
- How to manage stress and avoid weight gain
- How to stay smoke-free for good

Lifestyle Reboot Program – Lose 5% of your starting weight and reach at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week through healthy lifestyle changes.

If you're ready to take control of your health and get support along the way, call 866-415-7138 (TTY: 711) for more information.

Wellness corner

Whether you're new to running, dusting off your old track shoes or looking to pick up your pace, 5K Your Way, offered by Geisinger Health and Wellness, will get you moving. New training plans introduce running concepts and skills gradually, helping you become more active while you reach your personal goals. This program includes a training schedule and resources to keep you motivated. 5K Your Way begins Monday, May 2. Register today at Go.Geisinger.org/WellnessCalendar. Need help registering or have questions? Call 866-415-7138 or email wellness@geisinger.edu.

Build more healthy habits and find further fun challenges: Go.Geisinger.org/WellnessCalendar





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Need more healthy tips? Check out these resources

PA Health magazine offers general wellness information, recipes, personal stories and more. Read it online at geisinger.org/magazine, sign up to have it delivered to your email inbox or get a printed copy mailed free to your home.

Balance by Geisinger helps you live a healthy, well-balanced life by bringing you answers to your health and wellness questions, fitness tips and healthy recipes. Check it out online at geisinger.org/balance.



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