



Safe Environments

Healthy Workers

5 TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY AT WORK AS AN OLDER WORKER

According to the latest census, for the first time, the number of seniors exceeds the number of children aged 14 and under¹. This means that we are facing a labour shortage as there are fewer people entering the workforce and more people leaving it. The employment rate for both men and women over 65 is increasing, especially after the end of mandatory retirement in 2006². Delayed retirement is excellent for social security and the economy, but it may raise some questions – what about the health of senior workers like you? And are you able to perform well at your job past 65?

5 TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY @ WORK AS AN OLDER WORKER

Although work itself can be a health benefit to the body and mind, working safely is essential for health.

1. **Avoid night shifts.** With age, there are changes that happen in the circadian rhythm and as a result you may feel more active in the morning, unlike workers younger in age¹¹.
2. **Avoid working overtime¹¹.** Give yourself enough time to rest and recover from the workday.
3. **Be in a state of anticipatory care.** Learn about controlling pain and fatigue¹¹.
4. **Take advantage of learning opportunities.** Being open to organizational change and willing to learn can lower the risk of stress from dealing with new technologies. Studies show that older workers are able to learn new information well, even if some will require extra time¹².
5. **Take care of your body:** Avoid smoking, eat well, keep active, and follow the safety procedures and policies in your work place.



WHY YOU MIGHT WANT TO DELAY RETIREMENT

WORK LONGER LIVE LONGER

It's good for you. There have been studies looking at the correlation between retirement and its effects on health. Research shows that delayed retirement is associated not just with a healthier life, but with a longer one too³. At the same time, the life expectancy of Canadians is growing, balancing out the effect of delayed retirement on its length.

BE SOCIALLY ENGAGED

Retirement shrinks your social network and puts you at risk of experiencing social isolation⁴. Studies show that social isolation (especially perceived social isolation) increases sleep disturbances, depression, and fatigue⁵. In contrast, employment, as a form of structural social capital, can have a positive effect on general and physical health⁶. Increase in social interaction and a sense of self-efficacy that are associated with work contribute to the maintenance of cognitive reserve⁷. Overall, keeping your employment as you enter senior years can have a positive effect on your wellbeing.

KEEP YOUR BRAIN STIMULATED AND DELAY THE DECLINE IN COGNITIVE ABILITIES

Cognitive impairments are associated with a loss of quality of life, increases in disability, and higher health-related costs⁷. Work acts as a protector of cognition. Employment is a source of a stimulating environment where you can challenge your cognition and engage in more mental exercises⁸. It also protects against dementia⁸.

CONTINUE EARNING INCOME - PREPARE FOR A FINANCIALLY SECURE RETIREMENT

Grow your retirement savings by working a few more years. Delaying retirement also gives you an opportunity to defer your Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) which bumps your monthly payments by 0.7% each month that you defer⁹. Another option is to get a taste of the coming retirement by cutting back some hours from your work week and start receiving Old Age Security Pension (OAS) as it does not depend on your employment status. You can always defer OAS as well, and that's another bump to future monthly payments by 0.6% each month of OAS deferred, but this option may not be [useful for all](#)¹⁰.

HELP DELAY THE LABOUR SHORTAGE

Now, what about performance? Studies show that the performance does not decline with age, but instead better accuracy is observed¹¹. Of course, there are some age-related functioning declines, but they are compensated by experience¹¹. In fact, language abilities and problem-solving improve, caution and accuracy increase with age leading to less errors¹². Having older workers like you also helps with the transition of knowledge from one generation to another.

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