



Visit your [State of Iowa EAP portal](#) for a collection of beneficial stress-management resources.

Trade workplace stress for success:

4 myth-busting facts

Sometimes a little workplace stress can be just the push you need to successfully tackle an important project. But if that stress becomes persistent or overwhelming, it can prevent you from doing your best work — and negatively impact your mental and physical health.

So, how do you know if the stress you're experiencing is unhealthy, and what can you do to fix it? We'll dispel four common work stress myths and help connect you with information and resources to boost your well-being at work and beyond.

Myth 1: Feeling stressed or anxious is part of the job.

A certain amount of workplace stress is normal, and even expected. For example, you may feel nervous when starting a new project or stressed before making a big presentation.

But, if that stress doesn't subside and you find yourself struggling or feeling burned out, it's okay to ask for help. If you need help discussing communication troubles, disputes with coworkers, workloads, or other issues, reach out to your agency's management or an HR representative. You also have access to several State of Iowa resources that can help get you back on track (see left).

Myth 2: Workplace stress and anxiety are the same thing.

Stress and anxiety are actually quite different. And, knowing what makes them unique can help you better manage both.

Stress is the reaction to a specific situation. Once the situation has passed, the stress generally subsides. Anxiety, however, can become an ongoing challenge and worsen over time — even after the stressful event passes. Untreated anxiety may also interfere with daily activities and impact your job performance and personal relationships.

Talk therapy can be beneficial for managing both stress and anxiety. To learn more, dial 800-833-3031 to speak with an EAP counselor 24/7.



Not sure
how to start a
conversation?
Use these tips
to help guide
your discussion.

Myth 3: Talking about mental health at work is unprofessional.

If mental health challenges are preventing you from focusing on your work, it's important to speak up. Talking through what you're experiencing can help you and your leader find solutions together, so projects don't fall behind. Honest conversations about workplace stress can also build an environment in which everyone on your team feels safe, trusted, and supported.

Myth 4: Stress is all in your head.

Feeling stressed is a real response to a real situation. And, when stress is left unmanaged, it can produce several physical symptoms. According to the American Institute of Stress, there are as many as 50 physical symptoms of stress — including headaches, digestive irregularities, and sleep disturbances.

Additionally, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reports that unmanaged, acute stress can lead to more serious, chronic conditions (like heart disease, high blood pressure, and headaches), and mental health and behavioral changes (such as depression, substance abuse, and lack of focus or motivation).

The good news is that many of these issues can be managed or eliminated with help from a doctor or mental health professional. Regular checkups with your primary care physician (PCP) can also track how stress is affecting your body and help identify or treat any potential issues before they become serious.

Resources you can use

Understanding your triggers, knowing how to spot symptoms, and speaking with your leader can all help you better manage workplace stress and achieve on-the-job success.

You also have several valuable tools available through your State of Iowa benefits to help you boost your well-being at work, home, and everywhere in between:



- Download the [Healthy Everywhere Guide](#) to learn more about managing your mental health and well-being.
- Find in-network mental health providers at [Wellmark.com/Finder](https://www.wellmark.com/Finder).
- Schedule virtual visits with [Doctor On Demand](#)®.