



[www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com)

## Helpful Hints to Improve Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Tel. 0131 337 1890  
[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)

[www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com)

### The Facts

Stress remains the major British workplace health problem, according to research carried out by the TUC for its 2006 biennial safety reps survey.

A total of 3,339 union safety reps were questioned and 61 per cent said stress was their most pressing concern, pointing to excessive workloads, job cuts, rapid change and bullying as the most common triggers.

The findings are borne out in new Health and Safety Commission statistics which show that stress and musculoskeletal disorders accounted for three-quarters of the 24 million working days lost in 2005/06 through ill-health.

Altogether 30 million days were lost through work-related injury or ill-health, a drop from 40 million in 2000/02, according to Health and Safety Statistics 2005/06.

Source: Health and Safety Commission

### Helpful Hints to Improve Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

*"The true meaning of 'stress' is your stress response (eg the physical response to danger in fight or flight mode) which as a human being is your survival instinct and is what helps to keep you safe and alive.*

*Your overuse of this survival mechanism has led your path to the world of chronic stress where you see yourself struggling to cope with the demands of your lifestyle - poor energy levels, irregular sleep, muscle tension, digestive problems and so on. It doesn't need to be that you give up your whole way of life to reduce stress - just introduce regular and practical steps to balance lifestyle 'demands' with moments of peace.*

*We have to be alert to our chronic stress levels. You may think you have superhero qualities, but your body and your mind rapidly get your attention if you don't listen to the signs. "*  
**Lorraine Murray, Founder - Therapies United**

**We've put together this set of Helpful Hints to distribute to employees. Or if you would like to discuss organising a health and wellbeing session in your**

Visit [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) for further information

[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)

Tel. 0131 337 1890

CDs and Workshops at Feel Good Therapies Ltd - [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com) [info@ilovefgt.com](mailto:info@ilovefgt.com)

workplace/conference, please contact us on the above details.

Visit [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) for further information  
[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)  
Tel. 0131 337 1890

CDs and Workshops at Feel Good Therapies Ltd - [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com) [info@ilovefgt.com](mailto:info@ilovefgt.com)

## Helpful Hints to Improve Health and Wellbeing in Your Workplace

### Drinking Water

The human body is made up of 60 -75% water. Water is used by every physical cell in the body to support biochemical and metabolic processes - eg the body cannot function optimally or efficiently when it is not well hydrated with fluids.

On average, your body loses 8 - 12 cups of water a day. This is increased by exercise, hot weather, low humidity, altitude, high fibre diet, consumption of caffeine and alcohol.

Brain tissue consists of 85% water, and with dehydration, the level of energy production in the brain decreases. Depression and chronic fatigue syndrome have been linked to dehydration. Dehydration causes an increase in the internal temperature of the body and may result in headaches.

**To increase your water consumption...** keep a large water bottle in your fridge at home. Add lemon or lime to your water if it allows you enjoy it more.



**Workplace tip**      **Keep a bottle of water on your desk and try to finish it each day.**

### Cut down on stimulants

Caffeine is commonly found in coffee, tea, soft drinks and chocolate. It acts as a stimulant and is useful for the occasional 'pick me up' when energy levels are low. But if used and abused to help you keep up with your lifestyle, it produces a similar reaction in the body to that of the 'fight or flight' syndrome - which in the long term leads to chronic stress. Change (gradually if you are a real 'addict') to decaffeinated coffee, tea and soft drinks.



**Workplace tip**      **For every caffeine beverage you drink, drink a glass of water.**

**If you frequently take caffeine stimulants - don't just suddenly stop. The withdrawals symptoms could be unpleasant. Gradually introduce more decaffeinated options and as the first tip says - drink more water!**

Visit [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) for further information

[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)

Tel. 0131 337 1890

CDs and Workshops at Feel Good Therapies Ltd - [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com) [info@ilovefgt.com](mailto:info@ilovefgt.com)

## Learn meditation

Meditation isn't some new - it's a method of 'mind management' that has been around for thousands of years.

"When I was a senior manager covering a Scotland and managing a team of 10, I remember my weekly group meditation being the only thing that seemed to keep me 'sane' and my energy and stress levels balanced. There are many physical, emotional and mental benefits for learning and practising meditation and it is particularly good for reducing the effect of chronic stress and improving self-esteem."

*United*

*Lorraine Murray, founder - Therapies*

If you feel too self-conscious to learn in a group - try a CD. We offer beginner CDs for practise at work or in your own home. Or try a course/workshop in meditation. We can help organise this as part of a health and wellbeing day too. Or encourage your employees to find a class local to them.

CDs and classes are offered by Feel Good Therapies Ltd at [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com)



### Workplace tip

**Use a meditation or relaxation CD at your desk with earphones on. A couple of minutes a day will make a positive difference.**

**If resources allow - bring someone into the workplace to teach relaxation and meditation techniques.**

## Remember to have 'me time'

Often we try to cram so much into our day that we forget to let ourselves have 'me time'. Perhaps it seems selfish to take 'me time' but in the long run you are helping yourself and everyone who cares about you if you learn to look after your health with 'me time'.

What does 'me time' mean? It could be taking time to read a great novel, try a new hobby, garden, having a soothing bath, taking a walk near trees/the sea, having a massage or facial... The point is it is doing something which is relaxing and where you can have a bit time to yourself. TV and shopping don't count (they tend to drain our energy - sorry!) If you are looking for a therapist to try some complementary therapies - visit our screened register of therapists at [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) - it's free to browse and they have special offers too.

Or we can help your employer organise therapies in the workplace too - contact us for details.



### Workplace tip

**Many companies now organise therapy tasters/treatments on a monthly basis in the workplace. It helps staff try different therapies and the regular taster helps staff to take a short break during their day to de-stress.**

Visit [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) for further information

[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)

Tel. 0131 337 1890

CDs and Workshops at Feel Good Therapies Ltd - [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com) [info@ilovefgt.com](mailto:info@ilovefgt.com)

## Learn Techniques to Improve your Health and Wellbeing

If you are looking for new skills and techniques to help reduce stress and improve your health - then think about learning 'moving meditation' - activities like Tai Chi, Qui Gong or Yoga all help to develop your inner awareness through movement.



### Workplace tip

**Ask whether there is funding and space to have a tutor demonstrate techniques in the workplace or check out corporate memberships of health clubs who offer these activities.**

## Life Changes

Life presents us with all sorts of challenges - birth, marriage, death, divorce, change of job, change of home, starting a business etc etc. Take time to reflect on what has happened in your life in the last 5 years.

Have any of the 'big stressors' above taken place (and don't think that this is a definitive list... it's not!) At the time of the big stress, did you allow yourself more 'me time', recognise that you needed to reduce responsibilities or take steps to care for yourself? Or did you just soldier on?

If it was impractical for you to do this at the time, did you allow yourself to do this 6 or 12 months later? Did you seek any support from friends, family... a professional therapist? Chronic stress is a long-term issue. It creeps up on us until eventually we are presented with emotional, physical or mental challenges that we can't ignore. Give yourself some comfort in knowing that the way you feel now is as a result of all the life experiences you've had to date. If you've had no time for 'me' ... choose to make that time now.



### Workplace tip

**As recognise that your work and home life are connected and that changes in one area of your life have a ripple effect on others. Don't take the superhero challenge - take some 'me time' and/or get support.**

Visit [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) for further information

[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)

Tel. 0131 337 1890

CDs and Workshops at Feel Good Therapies Ltd - [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com) [info@ilovefgt.com](mailto:info@ilovefgt.com)

## Improve your Sleep

Feeling tired doesn't necessarily mean you can get to sleep easily (nor stay asleep if you are prone to waking up and unable to switch off your mind). Your physical energy is low but your mind is active.

Our brain changes its level of alertness as we move through different states - full alertness (beta) to alert but relaxed (alpha) and eventually to light sleep (theta) and deep sleep (delta). If we are constantly on full alert - the connection with our relaxed state seems to be difficult to develop - but you can help this 'alpha' state by trying to develop a bedtime routine which includes - no caffeine after 5pm, a warm bath with or without aromatherapy oils, reading a fictional book, listening to some soothing music or a relaxation CD, learning how to breath using your diaphragm (called 'belly breathing') to help induce a relaxed state.

You don't need to try all of these - but 2 or 3 used regularly should help.



**Workplace tip** If energy levels are really low - try this brief visualisation exercise.

Switch off the phone/divert calls for a few minutes. Ensure the soles of your feet are on the ground - notice your posture (is your back straight?) Let your hands relax (not poised over they keyboard). Take a deep breath and imagine it moves down your arms into your hands - as you breathe out let your hands relax a little bit more. Do this a few times.

Notice your shoulders - do they feel tense? Gently roll them in a clockwise then anti clockwise direction. Take another breath and this time imagine it moving into the muscles around your shoulders - as you breathe out let your shoulders sink towards the floor - releasing tension as you breath out.

Now focus on your feet - sense your feet on the floor. Do your feet feel comfortable? Why not take off your shoes? Now take a deep breath and let it move right down through your body and as you breathe out, through your feet into the floor. Do this a few times and each time let your feet sink further into the floor.

Please contact us if you have any questions about the information presented in this tips sheet, or want to know more about some of the services, workshops and sessions we run both in and out of the workplace.

Good luck!

Visit [www.therapiesunited.com](http://www.therapiesunited.com) for further information  
[info@therapiesunited.com](mailto:info@therapiesunited.com)  
Tel. 0131 337 1890

CDs and Workshops at Feel Good Therapies Ltd - [www.ilovefgt.com](http://www.ilovefgt.com) [info@ilovefgt.com](mailto:info@ilovefgt.com)