



TIP SHEET.

The off switch for work stress.

Most of us naturally take on and respond to the increasing demands of life, whether from family, children, social, or personal needs. If you combine this with demands in the workplace such as deadlines, high workloads, long hours, and high expectations from managers and clients, we can start to feel overloaded and to have difficulty coping. We may not notice the impact that these stressors are having on our health and well-being until they really take their toll.

Work stress and burnout can look different for everyone. Here are a few of the potential warning signs:

- Unwanted, persistent and worrying thoughts about work, particularly when not at work
- Fatigue or tiredness
- Insomnia or sleep difficulties
- Low mood
- Feeling anxious or nervous
- Frustration or irritability
- Difficulties concentrating or focusing at work
- Withdrawal from usual activities
- Withdrawal from friends and loved ones
- Becoming sick with common viruses more frequently
- Physical signs such as chest pain, headaches/migraines, heart palpitations, dizziness (it is a good idea to check with your GP if you are experiencing these symptoms).

Studies show that what we do in our spare time away from work, can play a large role in buffering stressors and creating a positive mood state so that we are ready to face the next day.

What to Do: Take a step back and put yourself first.

- Incorporate regular recreational activity, including some physical exercise.
- Be kind to your body by healthy eating and drinking, and having good quality sleep.
- Share your thoughts with someone you find supportive.
- Spend time with family or friends and share positive experiences of the day. We tend to hold on to the negative experiences of our day and forget about what went well. Focus on what was positive in your day and share those stories with your loved ones.
- Make time for yourself to quietly relax, or do an activity you enjoy.
- Schedule leave. If your annual leave has been adding up, maybe it's time to book some leave and have a break.
- Leave your work at work. Turn off your work phone. Don't check your work emails. If you do need to do work at home, schedule time for work and for relaxation and stick firmly to the limits set.
- See our 'Radical Resilience' tip sheet for some further helpful, preventive and self-care strategies.