

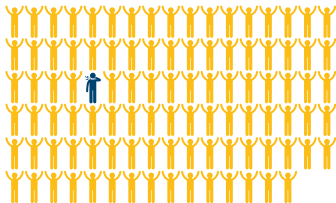
# The Disability Disconnect

What are the chances you won't be able to work for even a short time at some point in your life? Pretty good, actually. You might have a baby or sprain an ankle or have surgery after you tear a knee ligament.

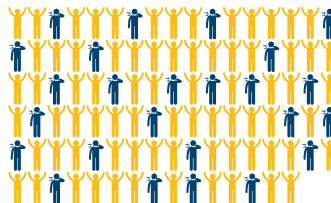
Do you have enough savings to be out of work for three months or longer?

**Weighing the odds.** The chance of missing work for three months or more is far higher than most of us realize. Weekend warriors have accidents. Cars crash. Bones break. Backs hurt...badly. People go through chemo. Ligaments are easily torn. All of these—and more—can keep you out of work longer than you expect.

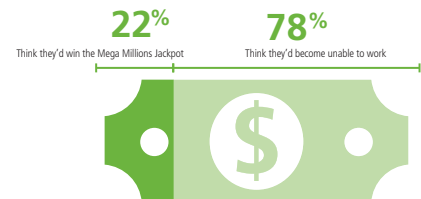
Only **1%** believe they'll be out of work for more than three months.<sup>1</sup>



More than **25%** will become disabled before they retire.<sup>2</sup>



More than **1 in 5** think they are more likely to win the Lottery than not be able to work for more than three months.<sup>3</sup>



**Time is money.** Being out of work for more than three months can be devastating to a person's financial situation. Can you pay your bills without an income?

More than **half** would use savings to pay bills if out of work. Do you have enough savings to last longer than three months and up to two and a half years?<sup>4</sup>

**55%**

Tap into savings or investments



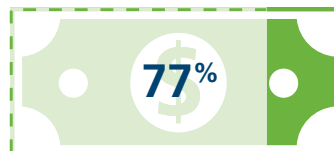
**33%**

Sell some possessions

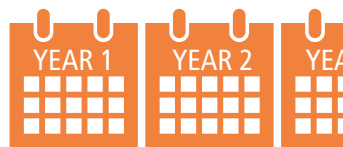


**29%**

Use credit cards or a loan



More than **3/4** say no. They could not pay their bills for more than a year without an income.<sup>5</sup>



Once you've been out of work for three or more months, the average time off of work due to a disability is **2.6** years, which means your savings, credit cards, loans, or selling your possessions has to last that long.<sup>6</sup>



A disability lasting 2.6 years translates to **135** weekly paychecks missed.



At the average wage of \$21.72 an hour,<sup>7</sup> that's enough money to buy **6** compact cars.<sup>8</sup>

## Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Only 1% of working adults believe they'll be out of work for three months or more, according to the [CDA Disability Statistics](#).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet, April 2, 2014

<sup>3</sup> More than 20% believe they have a better chance to win the Lottery than become disabled in their lifetime, according to the [2014 CDA Consumer Disability Awareness Study](#).

<sup>4</sup> More than half say they would use savings if out of work, according to the [2014 CDA Consumer Disability Awareness Study](#).

<sup>5</sup> Sixty-five percent could not pay their bills for more than a year, according to the [CDA 2014 Consumer Disability Awareness Study](#).

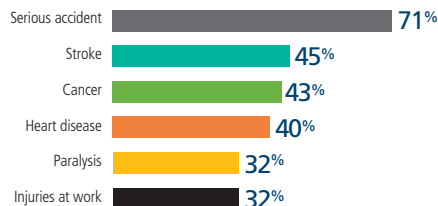
<sup>6</sup> The average group long-term disability claim lasts 2.6 years, according to the Gen Re, U.S. Group Disability Rate & Risk Management Survey 2012, based on claims closed in 2011.

<sup>7</sup> The average wage is \$21.72 per hour, according to the U.S. Department of Labor—Economic News Release USDL-15-0386, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, 2015-03-11

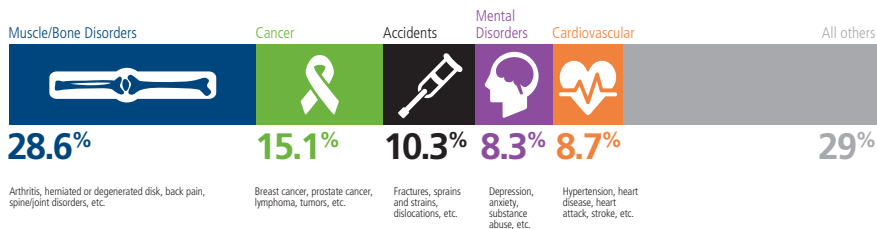
<sup>8</sup> Estimate based on [Edmunds.com](#) Price Promise for a new 2015 Honda Civic as of 2015-04-01

**Causes for concern.** Many of us underestimate our risks because we don't truly understand what "disability" means.

Nearly **75%** say it's very or somewhat likely they'll have a serious accident in their lifetime, yet don't have a plan to protect their income when that happens.<sup>9</sup>



Nearly **1/3** of all injuries that cause a person to be out of work for more than three months are back- or joint-related.<sup>10</sup>



**Women's bundled risks.** Because of child-birth and increased risk of heart disease, women are at the biggest risk to be out of work for more than three months. A long-term illness, injury, or accident is more likely to happen for women.

Women made up the majority of new long term disability claims in 2013.<sup>11</sup>



Maternity leave is considered a disability, and can be covered by short-term disability insurance.<sup>12</sup>

**No time to waste.** Your life can change in an instant. Sometimes we can plan for life-changing events and other times it's out of our control.



Every **7** seconds, someone in the United States suffers an illness, injury, or accident that will keep them out of work for more than one month.<sup>13</sup>

**Visit [blog.DisabilityCanHappen.org](http://blog.DisabilityCanHappen.org) to learn how to protect your income in the event of an injury, illness, or accident.**

The Council for Disability Awareness helps you understand what is considered a disability, how it can affect your livelihood, and how to protect your income.

The Council for Disability Awareness is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating the American public about the chances of experiencing an income-interrupting illness, injury or surgery, and how to have a plan for these times. The CDA engages in research, communications and educational activities that provide information and helpful resources to working consumers, employers, financial advisors, consultants and others who are interested in helping employees, freelancers and entrepreneurs prepare for the personal and financial impact time out of work can have on wage earners and their families.

**Footnotes:**

<sup>9</sup> Seventy-one percent believe they will have a serious accident in their lifetime, according to the [CDA 2010 Consumer Disability Awareness Study](#).

<sup>10</sup> Nearly 30 percent of all long-term disability claims are back or joint-related, according to the [CDA 2014 Long-Term Disability Claims Review](#).

<sup>11</sup> Women made up the majority of new long-term disability claims in 2014, according to the [CDA 2014 Long-Term Disability Claims Review](#).

<sup>12</sup> From 2013-2014, new long-term pregnancy-related claims increase 24%, accounting for 12.3% of all new disability claims by women, according to the [2014 CDA Long-Term Disability Claims Review](#).

<sup>13</sup> Every seven seconds, a working-age American suffers a disabling injury or illness that will last for at least one month, according to [America's Disability Counter](#).