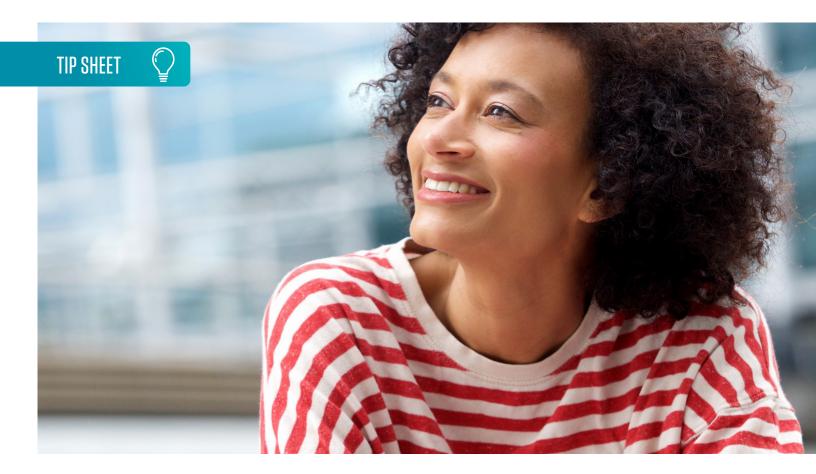# How to stay safe and healthy at work during COVID-19

TIP SHEET

Avoiding contact with people who are sick and by closely complying with World Health Organisation's guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19 are critical steps towards minimising the spread of the virus.

Next, by prioritising the importance of physical health and mental wellbeing, both at home and in the office, employers can help make the workplace safer and healthier for employees by encouraging healthy habits.

10 Healthy Habits to Stay Safe and Healthy at Work

1. Enhance immune system: Those most affected by COVID-19 are individuals with compromised immune system. Three commonly accepted methods of building immunity are through 1) consumption of whole fruits and vegetables, seeds, grains and beans 2) Healthy habits including sleep, stress management, and some form of body relaxation such as meditation and yoga and 3) consumption of foods rich in vitamin C such as kiwi fruits, citrus fruits, broccoli and spinach.

2. Limit news cycles: Continued media exposure to stressful events can have a significant impact on an employee's psychological wellbeing. With the COVID-19 pandemic dominating news cycles, watch smart and avoid overexposure. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting and stressful.

3. Take care of your body: During times of stress, pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly, keep your sleep routines and eat healthy food. Keep things in perspective.

4. Make time to unwind: Try to do some other activities you enjoy in the workplace environment. Remember to take breaks, get away from your workstation at least once an hour, stretch your legs. You'll be refreshed and more productive when you go back to work.

5. Positive psychology for positive physiology: Mental health professionals find practising gratitude can benefit physical health too. Start a gratitude journal and add an entry first thing after sitting at your desk each day. Try to prioritise this simple habit before starting anything else.

6. Recharge with a nap: Naps reduce stress and bolster immune systems. During a lunch break, find a quiet place and set an alarm for a 20-minute snooze.

7. Rejuvenate with a walk: Plug your earphones in and go for a walk during a call. Walking while on a call can improve confidence and self-assurance.

8. Adjust daily schedule: In a time of crisis, you may need to adjust your schedule to accommodate uncertainty. Time management is key to maintaining a professional life when your personal life requires more attention than usual. Maintaining a flexible schedule can help mitigate the stress associated with uncertainty.

9. Be careful with meetings and travel: Use videoconferencing for meetings when possible. When not possible, hold meetings in open, well ventilated spaces. Also consider adjusting or converting large meetings or gatherings into smaller meetings or virtual sessions.

10. Stay home: Stay home if sick or have a compromised immune system. There are many reasons why you should stay home under these circumstances, but the most important reasons are related to your health and the health of others around you. If you begin to feel sick while at work, go home as soon as possible.

KEY TAKEAWAY: Identifying healthy habits and committing to a plan is one of the most important decisions you can make to take control of your health. Regular physical activity no matter what age or fitness level you are, is a key factor in staying healthy.

Ready to take your employee wellbeing program to the next level? Talk to an expert at Virgin Pulse to get started.

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