



OFFICE LIFE

TIPS TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

Each year, chronic diseases claim the lives of a staggering 12.2 million people of active working age, mainly in developing countries. Carcinogens, injuries, ergonomic hazards and other specific occupational risks form “a substantial part of the burden” of these diseases.

While these insights from the World Health Organization (WHO) are far from rosy, according to the global body, research has shown that workplace health initiatives can help cut company health-care costs by 26% and sick leave absenteeism by 27%.

We all want (and deserve) to feel safe at work, but how do we get there?

When it comes to work-related disease prevention, the WHO says ventilation, furniture upgrades and noise control are among the many effective measures to take.

Of course, work health and safety laws, regulations and standards vary by location.

To help lower your risk at work, South Louisiana Medical Associates suggest workers do the following:

1. **Be vigilant** – Take responsibility for your safety and ensure that you’re fit for the job.
2. **Watch your posture** – This means protecting your back while sitting and lifting. If an object’s too heavy to move alone, seek human and/or mechanical help.

3. **Take breaks** – Fatigue can increase the risk of injuries, and regular breaks can help counter this.
4. **Operate equipment correctly** – This includes using the right tool for the right job, following safety procedures and only operating equipment you are permitted and trained to use.
5. **Pinpoint emergency exits and shut-off switches.**
6. **Report hazards** – Notify your manager of any potential safety concerns.
7. **Maintain cleanliness and organisation** – Be mindful of housekeeping-related areas, such as dust, clutter, spills, poorly stored items and equipment that has seen better days.
8. **Manage stress** – Consider reaching out to your manager if stress is a problem.
9. **Use protective equipment** – When a situation calls for hard hats, goggles, safety harnesses and gloves, for example, ensure you are fully equipped.

Work safety is everyone’s responsibility. Ensure you are familiar with your workplace’s health and safety protocols, and if in doubt, seek clarification.