

Why challenging times can feel stressful?

Challenging times in the workplace can impact everyone differently. We are often impacted by working long hours and planning for significant events. During these times emotions can run high for everyone, from employees to patients and their families.

It's normal to feel stressed during these periods. Our bodies and minds react to the uncertainty and changes around us. The longer the any challenge lasts, the more stress we might feel, similar to other crises but over a longer period.

During a stressful period, we may have physical symptoms like headaches, tiredness, trouble sleeping, or an upset stomach. Mentally, we may find it hard to concentrate, feel distracted or confused, or have negative thoughts. Emotionally, feelings like frustration, anger, fear, or anxiety are common. Some people may feel numb or detached. This stress can also affect our behaviour, like withdrawing from our relationships or everyday activities.

Not everyone will react in the same way. How we feel depends on factors like the stress we're already carrying from current or past events such as the pandemic. For those already under a lot of pressure, these recent experiences can feel even more overwhelming. However, past challenges can remind us of how we've coped before and what has helped us through tough times.

What you can do for yourself during this time:

1. **Monitor Your Perceptions:** Challenging events in the workplace are tough for everyone. We may start feeling blame or guilt which can affect our relationship with coworkers. When we are tired, it can be harder to show compassion to others. It's helpful to remember that we will still be working together after any challenge we are facing is over.
2. **Stay Informed:** Knowing what's happening can reduce anxiety and uncertainty.
3. **Build a Support Network:** Connect with your peers and build support. Sharing feelings and concerns with coworkers can help. It's also okay to take time for yourself to focus on other activities and interests.
4. **Practice Self-Care:** Prioritizing self-care activities you enjoy can help reduce stress.
5. **Stay Active:** Movement releases endorphins which supports our moods.
6. **Limit News Consumption:** While staying informed is important, too much exposure to news can increase anxiety for some.
7. **Practice Mindfulness, Grounding and/or Breathing:** Mindfulness techniques can help you stay grounded and manage stress.
8. **Advocate for Your Needs:** If you need specific accommodations or support during this time, don't hesitate to ask.
9. **Know Your Rights:** Be aware of your rights and obligations as an employee. This can reduce anxiety about potential repercussions.
10. **Seek Professional Help:** If you find yourself struggling with anxiety, depression, or other challenges, consider seeking professional help. Please see resources below.

Ongoing Support is Available During this Challenging Time

- **Access support through your Wellbeing Team at 204-926-9040 or 1-844-820-2010 (toll free) between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. daily.**
- Access support from your Manitoba Blue Cross EAP 24/7 at **204-786-8880** or **1-800-590-5553 (toll free)** or **workplacewellbeing@mb.bluecross.ca**
- Ongoing support is available to you during this challenging time. [Please click here for more information.](#)
- [**Doctor's Manitoba Physician and Family Support Program**](#) at **1-844-4DOCSMB (436-2762)**