



About the National Safety Council:



The National Safety Council saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads through leadership, research, education and advocacy. Visit us at nsc.org for up-to-date industry news, information and tools to take your safety program to the next level.

Happy New Year and welcome to *Spotlight on Safety*, an e-newsletter brought to you by the Department of the Interior Office of Occupational Safety and Health in partnership with the National Safety Council. We hope you will find this service of value. Send feedback or ideas on topics you would like to see to membershipinfo@nsc.org. Please put "Department of the Interior feedback" in the subject line.

While many of us need a certain level of stress to achieve peak performance, too much stress can lead to job burnout, anxiety, depression, insomnia, hypertension and illnesses.

5-Minute Safety Talk

Managing Stress at Work



This [5-minute Safety Talk](#) explains what an organization can do to reduce stress on the job.

Featured Safety Poster:



Well, Well, Well: 3 Keys to Good Health

Share this poster with your employees to remind them that diet, exercise and sleep is key to a healthy future.

Featured Webinar



Visit our [Online Learning Library](#) to view our extensive webinar selection. This month's suggested topic: [Integrating Health into your Safety Program](#)

Website Update



Due to a systems upgrade, the **Member Exclusive Site** will be unavailable from **January 15th - 19th**. We apologize for the inconvenience as we strive to improve your user experience.

NSC Safety Awards



Employee engagement is key to a successful safety program! An award from the National Safety Council shows them you appreciate their efforts.

Safety awards from NSC instill employee pride; earn respect from your customers, community and peers; and place you one step ahead of your competition. [Learn more.](#)

Learn about all the benefits available to you in our Member Benefits Guide



[See the benefits that are available to you and ALL your employees](#)

Take Steps to Get Healthier in 2016

It's official: The youngest Baby Boomers are in their 50s. As of 2015, the Boomer generation, born between 1946 and 1964, is about 75.4 million strong and is the largest workforce demographic.



We hear a lot about the "graying workforce" or "silver tsunami" these days. Numerous [articles](#) tout concerns about how employees (and employers) will pay their burgeoning healthcare costs, which can become particularly burdensome for individuals after retirement.

The Baby Boomer generation is living longer than their parents did but with [greater instances of diabetes, obesity, hypertension and other maladies](#). Employers and employees of all ages should take action now to reduce future healthcare costs, extend life expectancy and improve quality of life.

Employers often offer wellness programs, but even if your workplace doesn't have a gym, or formal weight loss and nutrition programs, you can [make smart choices](#) on your own.

Exercise Your Right to be Fit



Older Americans are generally active and want to enjoy life well into retirement, but they need to make health a priority now. Don't wait for retirement to get fit.

[The obesity epidemic](#) crosses every age group. Being sedentary and overweight, a common cause of disability in workers:

- Weakens the musculoskeletal system
- Causes changes in gait, which can lead to falls
- Can lead to diabetes, heart disease, stroke, arthritis, sleep apnea and cancer
- [Reduces life expectancy](#) significantly

Just 30 minutes of exercise a day can prevent weight gain:

- Walk or ride a bike to work
- Park farther from the entrance
- Go for a walk or climb stairs during breaks
- Take frequent short breaks to stretch
- Have meetings while walking

You Are What You Eat

Diet and portion control are as important as exercise in weight management. But Americans love to eat out, and food prepared at restaurants is not as healthy as food prepared at home. Making slight adjustments, like cutting out soft drinks and ordering healthy menu items, may give you more energy and prevent weight gain.



- Choose fish or lean cuts of meat
- Opt for plant-based foods
- Bring your lunch to work
- Don't skip breakfast; there's always time for fruit
- Drink lots of water throughout the day
- Keep healthy snacks in your desk drawer instead of going to the vending machine
- Avoid sugar
- Avoid all-you-can-eat buffets
- Follow these [10 Tips for Healthy Meals from choosemyplate.gov](#)

The Nation's Deadliest Drug Crisis



Data released Dec. 14 from the National Center for Health Statistics shows [opioid painkiller overdoses skyrocketed in 2014](#). Nearly 19,000 people fatally overdosed on prescription painkillers, including oxycontin, percocet and vicodin, making this the leading cause of unintentional death.

It's a [problem in the workplace](#), too. Nearly one-quarter of the U.S. workforce has used prescription drugs non-medically, and even employees who take a regular dose may be too impaired to work, especially in a safety-sensitive position. NSC reminds you to:

- Never share your medications with others
- Properly dispose of unwanted medications to prevent theft or misuse
- If you are prescribed painkillers, read warning labels carefully and take only as directed
- Ask your doctor for an alternative pain treatment
- Keep your medicines locked up and away from children; one in eight high school students admits to taking prescription painkillers non-medically
- NSC offers myriad research on prescription painkillers; [start here](#)

You Can't Bank Sleep

Sleep is critical in avoiding injuries at work and maintaining health long term. Millions of shift workers - who often work in inherently dangerous jobs - have particular challenges when it comes to sleep.



Lack of sleep can result in a variety of chronic illnesses, deadly vehicle crashes, depression and a host of other ills. Many people think sleeping more hours on the weekend allows you to "catch up." Not so, says the [Sleep Health Foundation](#).

"Regular sleep habits help build a good, strong sleep-pattern and keep you at the top of your game," according to the Foundation.

The [National Sleep Foundation offers these tips](#) to get more shut-eye:

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends
- Avoid naps during the afternoon
- Exercise daily
- Avoid alcohol and heavy meals in the evening
- Read or take a warm bath before bed
- Step away from technology in the evenings

Setting up an Employee Wellness Program



Getting fit involves breaking old habits and learning new ones. Rewarding employees for healthy activity can really help get a wellness program up and running.

Employers interested in starting a wellness program can check out this [ScoreCard from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Tools include a worksite health evaluation, sample reports, checklists and resources to get started.

Employee wellness programs can include:

- Smoking cessation
- Drug rehabilitation
- Nutrition education
- Weight management
- Stress management
- Help with depression
- Diabetes prevention
- Vaccines
- Health screenings
- Annual physicals

Older workers also may face loss of strength, vision and dexterity compared to their younger counterparts. Employers may want to consider installing handrails, conducting vision screenings, making sure the work area is free from trip hazards and allowing job-sharing opportunities.

Employers Value Older Workers

By next year, [one-third of all employees will be 50 or older](#), and the last of the Baby Boomers will turn 65 in 2029. But unlike a tsunami, this does not have to be a crisis.



Employers know this age group brings a great work ethic, loyalty, leadership and a wealth of experience to their jobs. What better way to show appreciation than to help take care of their health?