

# Risk Factors for Workplace Fatigue- Balancing Family and Work

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The accompanying video presentation discusses the issue of balancing family and work as a contributor to workplace fatigue. It begins with a discussion of work-family balance within the general population and how it is increasingly becoming a more prevalent issue. A definition of family-work balance is given, along with prevalence data from the evidence base.

The inability to balance family and work leads to several consequences one of which is increased risk of workplace fatigue. These consequences are reviewed as they relate to both in work life and in home life. The issue of workplace fatigue, drawing from a range of research including both general and healthcare populations, is then discussed illustrating how imbalance of work and family life can contribute to workplace fatigue. The evidence related to flextime, flexplace, and the potentially positive impact these options can have on work-family balance is reviewed along with examples of how each can promote work-family balance.

The second portion of the accompanying video presentation explores how balancing family and work and workplace fatigue affect occupational therapists. Workplace fatigue is a prevalent issue within health care providers, so it is important for occupational therapists to learn how they can manage this, or help prevent it. Several factors affecting occupational therapy practice are mentioned as they all have an effect on one's ability to balance family and work, which also contributes to workplace fatigue. Next, the video presentation suggests several strategies found by a previous study that occupational therapists could use to help promote work-family balance.

Occupational therapists strive to improve the quality of life in each of their clients. To provide optimal and safe care occupational therapists must attend to their own health, safety and quality of life needs. This can be achieved through balancing their family and work life, which will also help reduce workplace fatigue.

Work-life balance is a **shared responsibility** between individual therapists, their employers and the provincial government departments tasked to maintain healthy, safe, work environments. For example the Government of Alberta, Human Resources and Employment document ***Better Balance, Better Business: Options for Work-Life Balance*** (2004) [www.alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/betterbalance.pdf](http://www.alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/betterbalance.pdf) outlines regulations, responsibilities and strategies across all levels of the employment sector.

## Additional Resources

Links to websites where additional information can be obtained regarding workplace fatigue as well as balancing family and work life:

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety: Work/Life Balance

[http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/worklife\\_balance.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/worklife_balance.html)

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety: Fatigue

<http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/fatigue.html>

Canadian Mental Health Association: Work/Life Balance

<http://www.cmha.ca/mental-health/your-mental-health/worklife-balance/>

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