

Post-COVID Workplace Presents Challenges to Physical and Emotional Health

Experts offer tips for a healthy transition back to work as businesses begin to re-open

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

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Package Length: 1:50	Content provided by: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

NEWS PACKAGE


SUGGESTED TEASE	AS COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS LIFT AND BUSINESSES BEGIN TO RE-OPEN, MILLIONS OF AMERICANS FACE THE REALITIES OF RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE. TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE THE TRANSITION A HEALTHY ONE, COMING UP.
ANCHOR LEAD	AFTER MILLIONS OF AMERICANS DEALT WITH WEEKS OF WORKING FROM HOME, FURLOUGHS AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, RETURNING TO WORK CAN COME WITH A LOT OF ANXIETY AND HEALTH CONCERNS AS RESTRICTIONS BEGIN TO LIFT. BARB CONSIGLIO HAS TIPS FROM EXPERTS ON MAKING THE TRANSITION AS SMOOTH AND HEALTHY AS POSSIBLE.
(PACKAGE START) ----- CG: Courtesy: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center	(Nats - Sound) :02
Shots of Evan walking into work	EVAN WILKERSON'S COMMUTE TO WORK LOOKS A LITTLE DIFFERENT THESE DAYS. :04
CG: Evan Wilkerson Returning to workplace	<i>"Once I get to the office, I put on my mask as I walk into the building."</i> :04
Shots of Evan taking temperature	EVAN IMMEDIATELY TAKES HIS TEMPERATURE UPON ARRIVAL, SITS AT LEAST SIX FEET FROM HIS NEAREST CO-WORKER AND KEEPS SANITIZER HANDY BETWEEN FREQUENT HAND-WASHING.
Shots of workplace precautions	EXPERTS AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER AND OHIO STATE'S COLLEGE OF NURSING SAY THIS NEW NORMAL CAN BE HARD TO GRASP, BUT IT'S IMPORTANT NOT TO LET YOUR GUARD DOWN AS RESTRICTIONS LIFT.
Shots of virtual meeting	IN FACT, THINGS LIKE VIRTUAL MEETINGS SHOULD CONTINUE AS PEOPLE ARE PHASED BACK INTO THE WORKPLACE. :21
	<i>"Handshakes, things that we usually do to show</i>

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<p>CG: Dr. K. Luan Phan Ohio State Wexner Medical Center</p> <p>Shots of workplace</p> <p>Shots of handwashing</p>	<p><i>physical support for one another, will also not be allowable. So we'll have to find new ways to connect in this new work environment.” :13</i></p> <p>THE FEAR OF INFECTION COMBINED WITH A LACK OF PERSONAL CONTACT CAN BE EXTREMELY STRESSFUL, AND BECAUSE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH ARE DEPENDENT ON EACH OTHER, IT’S IMPORTANT TO TAKE CARE OF BOTH. :09</p>
<p>CG: Bernadette Melnyk The Ohio State University College of Nursing</p> <p>Shots of Evan working</p>	<p><i>“As they’re washing their hands, take some good big abdominal deep breaths. Say some positive, calming self statements. Little things like that can go a long way to reducing stress.” :18</i></p> <p>IN ADDITION TO STRESS RELIEF, BEING AS PREPARED AS POSSIBLE TO FIGHT OFF SERIOUS ILLNESS IS CRITICAL. :05</p>
<p>Bernadette Melnyk (CG’d earlier)</p> <p>Shots of people working out</p> <p>Shots of co-workers</p>	<p><i>“We want our immune systems functioning at peak capacity.” :06</i></p> <p>THAT MEANS PLENTY OF EXERCISE, AT LEAST SEVEN HOURS OF SLEEP EACH NIGHT AND A HEALTHY DIET.</p> <p>BUT IT ALSO MEANS FINDING WAYS TO CALM FEARS AND FIND A SENSE OF COMMUNITY. AND JUST AS FAMILY AND FRIENDS HAVE FOUND WAYS TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER THROUGHOUT THIS CRISIS, SO WILL CO-WORKERS. :14</p>
<p>Dr. Phan (CG’d earlier)</p> <p>Shots of Evan in virtual meeting</p>	<p><i>“What we need to do now is to extend that culture of caring and of safety beyond our immediate family and friends circle into the workplace circle. Because our colleagues are ultimately our family as well.” :13</i></p> <p>AT THE OHIO STATE WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER, THIS IS BARB CONSIGLIO REPORTING. :03</p>
<p>(PACKAGE END) -----</p> <p>ANCHOR TAG</p>	<hr/> <p>EXPERTS STRESS THAT IT ALSO MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER TO STAY HOME IF YOU’RE FEELING SICK TO REDUCE EVERYONE’S RISK OF INFECTION AND HELP YOUR CO-WORKERS STAY HEALTHY.</p>

SOCIAL MEDIA

<p> Share it! Suggested tweet:</p>	<p>As COVID-19 restrictions lift and millions of Americans return to the workplace, experts at @OSUWexMed have tips to make the transition a healthy one, both physically and emotionally. https://bit.ly/2WH7ewj</p>
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**Suggested post:**

After weeks of physical distancing, working from home and even furloughs or unemployment, millions of Americans will begin to return to the workplace as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Experts at [The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center](https://www.osu.edu/wexner) have tips on how to make the transition as healthy as possible, both physically and emotionally. <https://bit.ly/2WH7ewj>

EXTRA BITES

CG: Dr. K. Luan Phan
Ohio State Wexner Medical Center

Phan says inquire about what is in place at work to keep you safe:
“Ask their employer, ask their team leader, how are they being protected? What precautions are in place? What new setup to the workplace environment have been established in order to keep themselves safe and their coworkers safe so that they don't get infected.” :16

Phan says make a plan to balance work and home life:
“Try to have some sense of control in terms of your normal routine and plan for the routine. What does a morning look like? What does an afternoon look like? So that your work and your family life don't get out of whack and disrupted as you return to work.” :16

Phan says uncertainty amplifies fear:
“Anytime there's unpredictability in the environment, anytime there's ambiguity risk goes up. So the individual understands that, processes that and begins to then internalize it to the point where they exacerbate the fear because there's no end in sight.” :18

Melnyk says deep breathing is great for your overall health:
“Taking five deep abdominal breaths at least five times a day cuts the sympathetic response that helps us to go into fight or flight or raise our blood pressure.” :19

CG: Bernadette Melnyk
The Ohio State University College of Nursing

Melnyk says adjustments made to work from home will continue to be helpful:
“We have found ways to work that before maybe people weren't that amenable to working via telehealth, telecommute, all of that. So I think we can mix it up. The transition back will need to be done in phases.” :22

Melnyk says healthy practices boost the immune system:
“The importance of 30 minutes of physical activity five days a week, healthy eating, sleeping at least seven hours a night and practicing stress reduction is super important to keep our immune systems functioning at their peak.” :24

**CG: Evan Wilkerson
Returning to workplace**

Evan says being apart has actually brought his co-workers closer together:
"I feel actually our staff has maybe become closer than ever before, even though we're distant because we're really trying to keep each other happy and cheered up and I feel like we're texting each other and seeing inside each other's houses for the first time and just kind of watching everyone navigate the ups and downs of this."

Evan says is makes him a little nervous to go back to work:
"I'm a little nervous about going back into the office, especially just because I don't know where all my coworkers have been. I don't know who they've been in contact with and so I don't want to be catching or spreading the disease to people unnecessarily." :13

Evan says his employer has put practices in place to keep him safe:
"We can continue working from home when necessary, phasing us into the office. I really feel like my employer has made a huge effort to make everyone feel safe and healthy and isn't really pushing anyone beyond their capacity to be out in public." :13

Evan lists resources at work to keep everyone healthy:
"We have a ton of hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, we have a thermometer right when you go in to make sure that no one in the office is currently running a fever, masks for people that don't have them available." :15

For viewer information on this story contact:

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**Video content provided by: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
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