Remedy the consequences ( tertiary prevention)

This aims to prevent a situation from deteriorating, but also to prevent it from recurring, which is why this is considered a form of prevention even though it involves remedial action. The effect of such action is to remedy the impacts on people's psychological health by providing them with support and assistance.

Examples of measures:

1. Set up a support network
2. Establish an employee assistance program (EAP)
3. Create a return to work program
4. Make a mediation service available

NOTE: Secondary and tertiary prevention basically produce short-term results because they only address the consequences of psychological health issues in the workplace, and not the source. For this reason, it is important to develop primary prevention action strategies.

Remedy the consequences (tertiary prevention)

This aims to prevent a situation from deteriorating, but also to prevent it from recurring, which is why this is considered a form of prevention even though it involves remedial action. The effect of such action is to remedy the impacts on people's psychological health by providing them with support and assistance.

Examples of measures:

1. Set up a support network
2. Establish an employee assistance program (EAP)
3. Create a return to work program
4. Make a mediation service available

NOTE: Secondary and tertiary prevention basically produce short-term results because they only address the consequences of psychological health issues in the workplace, and not the source. For this reason, it is important to develop primary prevention action strategies.

Act respecting Industrial Accidents and Occupational Diseases (ARIAOD)

Should an employment injury exist (depression, adjustment disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, job burnout, etc.); a claim is filed with the CNESST (Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail).

Act respecting Occupational Health and Safety (AROHS)

Right of refusal (according to section 12): refusal with regard to danger to a person's mental health.

As is the case for physical danger, the employer is required to take the necessary measures to protect the psychological health of his workers (section 51), in particular by ensuring that the organization of the work and the working procedures and techniques do not adversely affect the safety or health of the workers.

Examples of measures:

- Set up a support network
- Establish an employee assistance program (EAP)
- Create a return to work program
- Make a mediation service available

NOTE: Secondary and tertiary prevention basically produce short-term results because they only address the consequences of psychological health issues in the workplace, and not the source. For this reason, it is important to develop primary prevention action strategies.

Prevent and cure

Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)

Occupational Health and Safety

9405 Sherbrooke Street East, Montreal, Quebec H1L 6P3

Telephone: 514 356-8888 Fax: 514 356-9999

E-Mail: sst@lacsq.org

For advice and solutions, consult your union or lacsq.org/sst

This brochure is offered to you only as an indication. Please consult the official laws for legal information.
CONSEQUENCES FOR WORKERS

Risk factors in workplaces can result in many consequences for workers. For example, the following signs and symptoms may indicate the presence of physical and psychological injury:

### Recognize the signs and the symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue, insomnia</td>
<td>Loss of memory, concentration</td>
<td>Irritability, sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digestive disorders</td>
<td>Distraction</td>
<td>Cynicism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea</td>
<td>Difficulty making judgments</td>
<td>Lowered self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hormonal imbalances</td>
<td>Indecision</td>
<td>Loss of sense of humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Vague sense of confusion</td>
<td>Loss of the ability to communicate, isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>Inability to perform simple tasks (e.g. mental arithmetic)</td>
<td>Paranoia, distrust and rigidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back pain</td>
<td>Non-existent</td>
<td>Alcoholism or substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Consequences for the organization

1. **Absenteeism**
2. **Presenteeism**
3. **Staff turnover**
4. **Loss of productivity**
5. **Increased overtime**
6. **Increased workload for colleagues**

### Preventive action

1. **Eliminate the source of the risks** (primary prevention)
   - The elimination of risks is the most effective type of intervention. This may involve a change in the work environment and work methods. It is an essential focus of action in establishing sustainable prevention.

   **Examples of measures:**
   - Intervene in the work environment and working conditions
   - Establish and apply a policy to eliminate psychological harassment and violence
   - Create a setting to discuss problems and solutions being sought in order to:
     - Clarify roles and responsibilities
     - Involve workers in decision-making
     - Alleviate sources of stress and pressure in the workplace
     - Improve communication
     - Implement measures that promote recognition in the workplace

   **Note:** A collective intervention to address mental health issues that involves the input of many workers creates a strong impetus for action to change work organization and to eliminate risks at their source.

2. **Reduce risks – build knowledge and skills**
   - It aims to alleviate the impacts on individuals by helping them to recognize and manage difficult situations. Thus, an individual will be better prepared to deal with mental health issues.

   **Examples of measures:**
   - Take stress management and time management training
   - Attend training sessions about psychological health in the workplace
   - Take part in relaxation or yoga sessions
   - Adopt healthy nutritional habits
   - Practise physical activities

---

**WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?**

Mental health issues have several names, including psychological distress, depression, anxiety, job burnout and adjustment disorder, among others.

**WHEN WORK MAKES PEOPLE SICK**

Work can pose psychosocial risks that may result in distress in the workplace. When a person is exposed to stressful situations either too often or over a prolonged period, he or she may become vulnerable to developing mental health issues. The following risk factors may exist in workplaces:

- Work overload (qualitative or quantitative)
- Low workload
- Unclear roles or role conflict
- Low level of involvement in decision-making
- Lack of recognition in the workplace
- Low level of decision-making latitude in the workplace
- Lack of social relations or difficult relations in the workplace
- Negative environment and poor working conditions
- Difficult work schedules, split shifts, schedules not established in advance
- Lack of organizational justice or fairness in the workplace