

What to Know

Research shows:

- Roughly ½ of workers who experience a time loss injury will experience symptoms of depression (ref: heretohelp.bc.ca).
- The chance of returning to work greatly reduces when a worker is off longer than 2 to 3 weeks.
- Workers may experience stress, anxiety, or depression after an injury due to:
 - Financial strain (loss of wages)
 - Fear of job loss
 - Judgement from friends/coworkers
 - Lack of support while injured
 - Disruption of sleep and routine
 - Loss of connection with social circles
 - Inability to keep up with normal stressors of life such as personal hygiene, childcare, laundry, grocery shopping, etc.
 - Loss of fulfillment or purpose
 - Concerns over physical recovery and long-term health
 - Changes in motivation and mood
 - Stress disorder diagnosis after being involved in or witnessing a traumatic event

Additional Resources

Crisis Lines: 1-800-784-2433 or 9-8-8

Mental Health Support Line: 310-6789

Drug and Alcohol Info and Referral: 1-800-663-1441

Mental Health Services: helpstartshere.gov.bc.ca

Mental Health Information: heretohelp.bc.ca

Free Wellness Program: bouncebackbc.ca

What This Means for Employers

- **Invest in recovery at work programs** to increase the likelihood of worker return and retention. The longer a worker is away from work, the harder it is for them to return.
- **Use clear, empathic communication** with the worker as a powerful first step after an injury. Show care and express value to the individual personally and professionally. Avoid focusing only on when they will be returning to work.
- **Minimize the impacts of the injury** on the worker. Expect and acknowledge that stress, anxiety, and depression are common and normal responses to an injury.
- **Ask appropriate questions** to the worker regarding their prognosis and recovery. You can legally ask about their prognosis (not their diagnosis), recovery progress, and how it relates to their return.
- **Advise on available supports** – direct support from the employer, Employee Assistance Programs, and community support programs such as help lines, 1 on 1 visits, support groups, etc.
- **Healing takes time** – trust the journey and the worker. It may not be a straight line to recovery as progression and regression is common.
- **Keep the worker as connected** to the team during time away. This will make a big difference in their ability to return.