

# Enterhealth Mental Wellness Stress Podcast Script

Thank you for joining us for a podcast prepared for you by the experts at Enterhealth, a national provider of medically based mental health and substance use treatment services. In this podcast, we'll explore how stress can turn into burnout and what you can do to prevent it.

As humans, we are hardwired for stress – it's our body's physiological response to real or perceived external stressors. And while we typically view stress as a negative experience, small amounts of stress can actually improve your attention and focus, motivate you to complete tasks, and help your brain and body integrate and store important information.

Stress often becomes an issue when we experience it at a high level for a long period of time. Commonly referred to as chronic stress, this condition is less about driving in daily traffic or misplacing your wallet and more about working long hours on the job or caring for children around the clock.

If left untreated, chronic stress can lead to burnout, a serious health issue that causes severe physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. Much worse than ordinary fatigue, burnout can make it difficult for even the highest performing individuals to handle day-to-day responsibilities.

It's important to note that burnout can happen to anyone who is continually exposed to high levels of stress. Recent studies have found that everyone from business executives and medical professionals to remote workers and stay-at-home parents can suffer from this condition. And the risk for burnout can be especially high for individuals who strive for perfection or like to be in control.

Like many health issues, burnout is not something that happens overnight. In fact, there are several stages an individual may go through before reaching the point of burnout.

It will come as no surprise that pushing yourself to work harder is the first stage of burnout. Often fueled by both ambition and need, this stage can begin when you start a new job or project, accept a new role in a community group, or commit to new activities for your kids.

Adding these new responsibilities to your plate may quickly lead you to the most critical stage of burnout – neglecting your own needs. Whether you do it to save time or energy, you begin to sacrifice basic things like adequate sleep, regular exercise, healthy eating and social interactions.

It's not always easy to recognize when you've taken on too much, and you may deny the problem exists or place the blame on others. Further changes in your behavior toward others, such as growing impatient easily or snapping at people for no reason, may signal the next stage of burnout.

As stress continues to take its toll, you may start to disconnect – both figuratively and literally – from your life. With this stage of burnout, withdrawing from family and friends is common, as are feelings of detachment, emptiness and loneliness.

When burnout reaches its final stage, physical, mental and emotional depletion sets in. Along with fatigue, you may be prone to illnesses like colds or the flu, changes in appetite or sleep patterns, and frequent headaches or stomach issues.

If any stage of the journey to burnout sounds familiar to you, there are ways you can prevent or treat it, and it starts with getting back to the basics. Taking small steps to improve your diet, exercise and sleep are critical for helping you perform at a peak level.

Begin by sleeping an extra fifteen minutes each night or making your afternoon snack the one healthy thing you eat each day. And if you don't have time for the gym, find ways to work a few more steps into your routine, like parking further from building entrances or taking the stairs for a few floors.

When you're experiencing burnout, it can feel impossible to figure out how to ask for help. Start by looking at something concrete, like your calendar or to-do list, to see if there are items someone else can handle instead. Or if asking for assistance feels difficult, find a close friend or family member you can check in with regularly and talk about what you're both going through. You may be surprised just how common burnout can be and how willing others can be to help.

This concludes our podcast. If you or someone you know needs help with stress and is not sure what to do, reach out to Enterhealth by visiting [enterhealthmw.com](https://enterhealthmw.com). We're here for you when you need it most.