

Poll: 1 in 4 US Workers Say Work Has a Positive Impact on Their Health



Many studies have been done on the negative impact of work on your health. But a recent study found that work's impact on your health can actually be positive.

In a new NPR/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health poll, 44% of working adults said their current job has an impact on their overall health'and 28% said that impact is positive.

Of course, the bad news is that, of the more than 1,600 US workers surveyed, 16% reported that their current job has a negative impact on their health. Workers most likely to say their job has a negative impact on their overall health include those:

- With disabilities (35%)
- In dangerous jobs (27%)
- In low-paying jobs (26%)
- Working 50+ hours per week (25%)
- Working in retail (26%).

A number of working adults also reported that their job has a negative impact on their:

- Levels of stress (43%)
- Eating habits (28%)
- Sleeping habits (27%)
- Weight (22%).

In addition, 22% of working adults said that something at their job may be harmful to their health, including 43% of construction or outdoor workers and 34% of workers in medical jobs.

Among workers with health concerns about their workplace, the most frequently cited health concerns mentioned are chemicals and other contaminants (30%), unhealthy air (13%), accidents or injuries (12%), and stress (11%).

Other key findings:

- 51% said their workplace offers any formal wellness or health improvement

programs to help keep themselves healthy (here's information on how to use a guide to implement a successful workplace health promotion program)

- Nearly half of all workers (45%) rate their workplace as only fair or poor in providing healthy food options (see, how to use a food and beverage policy to improve workers' health)
- 55% said they still go to work always or most of the time when they have a cold or the flu, including 60% of those who work in medical jobs and 50% of restaurant workers.