

Learn About Burnout Syndrome (Work Exhaustion)

By Luis Fernando Velásquez Córdoba
Psychologist.
Salud VID



1. What is Burnout Syndrome (Work Exhaustion)?

Burnout Syndrome, or Work Exhaustion Syndrome, refers to a health condition an individual may experience due to high stress levels generated by a work overload, which causes chronic fatigue or tiredness. Likewise, emotional situations related to work that can affect a person's performance in the workplace may also be present. It is also known as "Síndrome del quemado" (literally, "Syndrome of the Burnt Out"). This chronic fatigue presents at both an emotional and physical level.

2. What are the symptoms and why is the diagnosis of burnout syndrome (work exhaustion) sometimes difficult?

The symptoms manifested by a person with Burnout Syndrome include:

- Mental and physical exhaustion.
- Decreased energy to perform work.
- Lack of interest and demotivation regarding individual work.

- Reduction in productivity and work performance.
- Postponing the completion of tasks or finishing them.
- Feeling incapable of facing new challenges or new tasks.

Other symptoms a person with Burnout Syndrome may experience are:

- Insomnia
- Gastritis (stomach irritation)
- Frequent sleepiness
- Decreased sexual desire
- Hair loss due to stress
- Frequent headaches
- Loss of appetite and weight

3. What risk factors are presented by burnout syndrome (work exhaustion)?

Burnout Syndrome not only affects the individual and their work performance; it also affects other aspects of their life, such as their romantic and family relationships. Furthermore, relationships with other people and friends can be altered, with the person

becoming irritable and occasionally appearing distracted or isolating themselves (not participating).

4. How to manage work exhaustion?

There is no single recipe or manual for managing work exhaustion; however, the person can engage in activities that help them prevent and also manage work exhaustion in a healthy way.

Some of these may be:

- Engaging in frequent and regular physical activity; that is, at least three times a week.
- Motivating the person to share camaraderie spaces with family and friends that allow them to enjoy and relax.
- Striving to have good eating and sleeping habits.
- Taking active breaks at work and respecting meal times, without abusing the established times for this at a professional level.

5. What are the consequences of not treating burnout syndrome (work exhaustion) in time?

Among the consequences that Burnout Syndrome can generate in the person are possible physical and emotional deterioration; their self-esteem and self-worth are also affected, as they tend to feel incapable of doing things, showing low tolerance for frustration and failure. Similarly, they may present abrupt changes in mood in the same

day or in a short period (a few days), which is often confused with bipolar disorder, which is something different.

6. When to consult for burnout syndrome (work exhaustion)?

It is important to consult a health professional when the signs and symptoms mentioned previously are present (see question 2). It is also important to follow the indications and recommendations that health professionals advise.



Recommended Readings and Pages Consulted on the Web

1. Benatuil, Denise Psychologist; Lic. Anna, Ana Psychologist; Lic. Boso, Gabriela Psychologist (2004). «SÍNDROME DEL QUEMADO (BURNOUT) EN TRABAJADORES DE LA SALUD». Acta Académica (Facultad de Psicología - Universidad de Buenos Aires). Accessed on April 28, 2021.
2. Gómez Sancho Marcos; Grau Abalo. Dolor y Sufrimiento al final de la vida. Arán Ed. 2006. Madrid
3. García, M. Llor, B. Y Sáez, C. 1994. Estudio comparativo de dos medidas de burnout en personal sanitario. Anales de Psiquiatría
4. López Yorente RM, Martín Montero CM, Fuentes González CI, García García E, Ortega Trillo R. Cortés Pendón AD, et al. El síndrome de Burnout en el personal sanitario Med. Pal. 2000
5. R., Gil-Monte, Pedro (2005). El síndrome de quemarse por el trabajo (Burnout) : una enfermedad laboral en la sociedad del bienestar. Ediciones Pirámide. ISBN 8436819497. OCLC 60372701.
6. Quiceno, J. M., & Vinaccia Alpi, S. (2007). Burnout: Síndrome de quemarse en el trabajo (SQT). Acta Colombiana de Psicología, Vol. 10, no. 2; p. 117-125.

Editorial Committee

Salud VID • Danny Javier Robles Gómez - General Director • Juan Mario Jaramillo Acosta - Director of Clinical Laboratory
 • Carlos Mario Cardona Betancur - Head of Dental Laboratory • Ana María Montoya Duque - Microbiologist
 • Daniel Mauricio Castañeda Vargas - Head of Marketing and User Experience
 Organización VID • Santiago Estrada Mesa - Assistance, Teaching, and Research
 Clínica Cardio VID • Juan Carlos González Arroyave - Scientific Director

