

RECOGNIZING AND HEALING BURN-OUT DURING COVID-19

Dental assistants are front line oral healthcare workers who must work and place themselves at increased risk of infection during the Covid-19 pandemic. The nature of your job during these unprecedented times may be adding additional stress into both your daily working environment and your personal life. It is important to understand what is burn-out, how to recognize the signs and what you can do to heal.

What is burnout?

“...a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.”

Reference: World Health Organization and International Classification of Diseases

Recognizing the signs of burn-out

Reference: HelpGuide.org

Feeling tired and drained
Frequent headaches, back pain, muscle aches
Change in appetite or sleep habits
Self-doubt, feeling as if you failed
Feeling trapped or defeated
Loss of motivation
Withdrawing from responsibilities or from people
Using food, drugs or alcohol to cope

How to feel better

- **Take some time for yourself** - relax, recharge and reflect
- **Evaluate your options** - discuss your specific concerns with your employer and try to work together to reach compromises or solutions
- **Seek support** - Whether you reach out to co-workers, friends or loved ones, support and collaboration might help you cope. If you have access to an employee assistance program, take advantage of relevant services or contact a mental health professional.
- **Get some exercise** – it will take your mind off of work
- **Get some sleep** – it will help protect your health
- **Practice mindfulness** - make an effort to face situations with openness and patience, and without judgment. Take a moment each day to focus on your breath flow and be aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment.

Reference: Mayo Clinic.org

CDAA: Advocating for you!