

Working with Your Condition: Advice for Employees

Work is good for our health and wellbeing. It gives us a sense of purpose, helps to build confidence and self-esteem, contributes to our happiness, and rewards us financially.

Although people living with injury, illness, or disability may experience barriers to work and require additional support to find and sustain employment, the benefits of work far outweigh the challenges. If you are living with an injury, illness, or disability, you are not alone. One in five people in Canada have a disability - that's 6.2 million people.

Key Advice about Managing Your Condition in the Workplace

Feeling challenged? You are not alone

If you are experiencing challenges with performing work tasks or feeling confident in your abilities, you are not alone. Most people experience some form of concern, nervousness, or lack of confidence at work. Remember that everyone feels overwhelmed or unsure sometimes. Especially in the first few days and weeks of starting a new job. Here is the secret - you CAN do it.

Get to know your team

Building strong relationships with your work teammates will not only make work more enjoyable, it will lead to a more productive team.

Open up (if you feel comfortable)

Once you have established those relationships, you might choose to be open with your team about your condition. It is totally up to you – you are not required to share information about your condition (unless it has workplace health and safety implications), but being open about your injury, illness, or disability will lead to greater understanding and awareness.

It will also lead to better support and ultimately, stronger relationships and friendships with your teammates.

Get the right support

All employees are entitled to reasonable adjustments to support them to perform their role. Whether this is physical modifications to the workplace, special equipment, training, flexible/part time hours or simply ongoing support - you are your own best guide. Know what you need and don't be afraid to ask for it. If you need support or guidance with making a request for support or adjustments, your employment consultant can help.

Tip Sheet: INJURY, ILLNESS, AND DISABILITY

Know your limits

If your injury, illness, or disability has an impact on your health and wellbeing needs at work, be aware and proactively manage this. You are your own best guide. While there are people available to assist, you know yourself best - trust yourself and look after your own health and wellbeing first.

Know your rights

You are not required to share information with your employer or teammates about your condition - unless it has an impact on health and safety. If your employer or a team member asks inappropriate personal questions about your condition, do not feel pressured to answer. If you need advice about your rights, speak with your manager, HR department, or employment consultant.

We all know the amazing feeling of getting a great job; the excitement, the sense of pride, and the feeling of optimism about the future. If you are living with an injury, illness, or disability, finding work can be life changing.

When you start that new job, be confident in your ability and the fact that your employer chose *you*. When you come across challenges - know that support is available and that the benefits of work far outweigh the challenges.