

Benefits of Returning to Work

Returning to work is not always easy but it's actually good for your health. This information sheet aims to help you understand why getting back to work is so important, what you can do to help yourself and where you can get support and assistance.

Why it's so important for you to return to safe and suitable employment

The earlier you start planning your return to work, the more likely you are to get back to work quickly. While a work-related injury or illness can have a big impact on your life, research has shown that getting back to work is important for your health and wellbeing. In general, work-related disability, unemployment and being away from work for a long time have a negative impact on health and wellbeing (*Source: Realising the benefits of work – College of Physicians position paper 2010*).

Impacts of long-term work absences due to a workplace injury

Long-term absences from work can affect you socially, financially and your job prospects. The possible impacts are:

Social	Financial	Job prospects
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolation from friends and colleagues• Loss of confidence• Loss of identity• Impact on family, including children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant financial impact (workers' compensation payments will not fully replace your lost wage)• Workers' compensation payments are time limited• Most workers' will not be eligible to receive weekly payments after 130 weeks	<p>Potential loss of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work conditioning• Currency of job skills• Work status• Work identity• Work contacts• Confidence to perform in a workplace setting• Training opportunities• Promotion opportunities

How you can help yourself get back to work after an injury

Act early.

Understand that the most important person in your recovery is you.

After your injury try to keep positive and motivated – focus on what you can do not what you can't. Don't wait till you are 100% recovered to return to work. Start a graded return to work ASAP.

Work actively and cooperatively with those involved in your return to work.

Raise issues or concerns immediately with the appropriate people.

Talk regularly with people involved about your progress and return to work planning. This may include your GP, your Return to Work Coordinator, your manager/supervisor and your Agent case manager – help them to help you get back to work.

Regularly review your return to work arrangements.

Focus on what you can do, not what you cannot do.

Incorporate work into your recovery - you don't have to be 100% to get back to work.

Ask for help/information when you need it.

Need support or assistance?

Talk to your:

GP

Return to Work Coordinator

WorkSafe Agent

The person you nominated to assist, support or represent you during the return to work process.

Call the WorkSafe Advisory service on freecall 1800 136 089 or visit worksafe.vic.gov.au/rtw