



# Comfort Zone

## Enjoy summer festival season safely

Summer festivals are a great way to enjoy the warm weather, the music, the food, and the entertainment. But not all festivals are created equal. Some may have more suitable options for your age group, your interests, and your budget. Before you buy your tickets, do some research on the festival website, social media, or online reviews. Find out what kind of activities, attractions, and amenities are available, and how they match your expectations and needs. For example, if you have young children, you may want to look for a festival that has a designated family area, a variety of rides and games, and a reasonable noise level. If you are a music lover, you may want to check the lineup of artists and genres, and the schedule of performances.

Once you have chosen your festival, you need to plan and pack smart. You don't want to be caught off guard by the weather, the crowds, or the long lines.

### Here are some things to consider before you head out:

- **Check the weather forecast and dress accordingly.** You may need to bring a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, a raincoat, or a sweater, depending on the temperature and the precipitation.



- **Bring a reusable water bottle and stay hydrated.** You may be walking a lot, sweating, or dancing, and you need to replenish your fluids. Some festivals may have water fountains or refill stations, but others may not. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, as they can dehydrate you and affect your judgment.
- **Bring some snacks and cash.** You may get hungry or thirsty, and you may not want to wait in long lines or pay high prices for food and drinks. Some festivals may allow you to bring your own food, but others may not. Check the festival rules and

regulations before you go. Also, bring some cash, as some vendors may not accept credit cards or mobile payments.

- **Bring a first aid kit and any medications you may need.** You never know when you may get a cut, a blister, a headache, or an allergic reaction. It's better to be prepared than to suffer or miss out on the fun. Also, bring any prescription or over-the-counter medications you may need, such as inhalers, epi-pens, or painkillers.



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## Do you know the potential hazards in your home, condo or apartment?

(NC) House, condo, apartment or whatever you call home, it's supposed to be a safe space for friends and family to gather. But our dwellings can also be home to things that can pose a risk to our health, especially if we don't know how to protect ourselves. Here are three things to be on the lookout for, and what to do about them.

### Lead paint and plumbing

Houses built before 1991 may contain a variety of products contaminated with lead, most commonly paint and parts of the plumbing system. Ingesting lead can cause developmental issues in children, damage to the brain, nervous system and kidneys of people of all ages, and other problems.

Lead paint was used inside homes until 1960, and it's still on the walls of many older homes. The lead gives it a sweet taste so if old paint is flaking off, children might eat it. Lead was also found in exterior paint until 1990. If you think your home might be affected, there are testing kits and various ways to fix with a positive result.

Lead was also commonly used in plumbing until it was banned in pipes in 1975 and when lead solder was prohibited in 1986. Most municipalities offer free or low-cost kits to test for the presence of lead in your home's water supply.

### Household chemicals

Many of us stock a surprising number of chemicals in our homes. These can include everyday cleaning products, bleach and other stain removers in the laundry room and the windshield wiper fluid and antifreeze we rely on for safe driving.

Protect younger children by storing housecleaning, laundry and painting supplies in a locked cupboard or storage room that they can't get into.

Teach kids what the various hazard signs mean on a package, including poison, explosive, corrosive and flammable.

If someone has consumed a toxic substance, seek medical attention or call Canada's new toll-free number immediately for advice: 1-844-POISON-X (1-844-764-7669). In Quebec, call 1-800-463-5060.

Learn more about some of the risks you might have in your home at [canada.ca/healthy-home](http://canada.ca/healthy-home).



## How worried should we be about asbestos?

(NC) Asbestos has been a hot topic on many home renovation TV shows for years. The contractor calls up the homeowner and says that all work must stop because they've discovered asbestos. But what is asbestos and how worried do you have to be? Here's what you need to know.

### What is asbestos?

Before 1990, asbestos was used to insulate against cold temperatures, noise and fire. The mineral material makes products strong, long-lasting and fire-resistant. You can still find it in old building materials like siding, plaster, floor and ceiling tiles, drywall and caulking, as well as insulation around pipes and in walls. It was also used in auto parts such as clutches and brake pads.

Asbestos is no longer allowed in Canada because breathing in its tiny fibres can cause serious health issues, such as cancer and lung scarring. While asbestos isn't used anymore and new-build homes won't contain it, some situations merit a second thought.

### Old home renovations

If you have an older home and you're planning to renovate, be prepared to budget for asbestos testing and abatement. Have a professional test before the project starts. If they find asbestos and recommend removal, hire a qualified asbestos specialist to remove it safely before your renos begin.

This is not a do-it-yourself job. If you disturb asbestos, say by drilling into walls or ripping

out old tiles, the nearly invisible dust-like fibres will get into the air you breathe. A mask isn't enough protection since the fibres could circulate through your ventilation system.

### Vermiculite insulation

Vermiculite-based insulation in walls or attics may contain asbestos. If your home has this type of insulation, don't disturb it or try to remove it. Instead, you can reduce your asbestos exposure by sealing the gaps around the attic hatch, baseboards, light fixtures, electrical outlets, and window and door frames. Avoid using an attic with this type of insulation for storage.

Note: There are usually no significant health risks if materials containing asbestos are tightly bound in products and in good condition, sealed behind walls and floorboards, isolated in an attic and left undisturbed.

### Vehicle maintenance

If you have an old car or truck you cruise through your neighbourhood in or tinker around with, then you should take some care. Check with your parts supplier to find out if the old brake pads or clutch contain asbestos and consider getting the car serviced only by professionals; they can take proper precautions.

Find more information about asbestos and creating a safer home at [canada.ca/healthy-home](http://canada.ca/healthy-home).

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# How to practice tolerance and inclusion in the workplace

Tolerance is the ability to respect and appreciate the differences and perspectives of others, without judging or discriminating them. Tolerance is essential for creating a harmonious and productive work environment, where everyone feels valued and respected. Tolerance also fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion, where people from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, and ages can work together and learn from each other. Diversity and inclusion are not only beneficial for us, but also for the organization, as they can enhance creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and customer satisfaction.

Inappropriate language is any form of communication that is offensive, disrespectful, or discriminatory towards others. It can include words, phrases, jokes, gestures, images, or sounds that are derogatory, stereotypical, or hateful. Inappropriate language can create a hostile and uncomfortable work environment, where people feel excluded, humiliated, or threatened. It can also damage the reputation and image of the organization, and lead to legal consequences.

## Some examples of inappropriate language are:

- Using racial, ethnic, religious, or gender-based slurs or epithets.
- Making jokes or comments that mock, ridicule, or belittle someone's culture, beliefs, appearance, or identity.
- Using sexual or vulgar language or

making unwanted sexual advances or innuendos.

- Using abusive, threatening, or violent language, or implying physical harm or intimidation.
- Using language that implies superiority, inferiority, or preference of one group over another.

Promoting a positive work environment with fellow co-workers is not only a matter of avoiding inappropriate language, but also of actively demonstrating tolerance and inclusion.

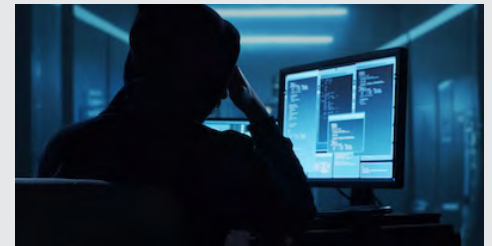
## Here are some tips on how to do so:

- Be respectful and courteous to everyone, regardless of their differences or opinions.
- Be open-minded and curious about other cultures, perspectives, and experiences.
- Be supportive and cooperative with your team members and acknowledge their contributions and achievements.
- Be empathetic and compassionate and show interest and concern for your co-workers' well-being.
- Be constructive and positive and give feedback and criticism in a respectful and helpful way.
- Be willing to learn from your mistakes and apologize if you offend or hurt someone.
- Be proactive and seek opportunities to learn more about diversity and inclusion, and participate in training, workshops, or events that promote them.



# Rising fraud trends

(NC) According to research from Royal Bank of Canada, 75 percent of Canadians say they are more concerned about fraud than ever before, and it suggests they have good reason. With the use of new technology and an increase in fraudsters coaching their victims, criminals are employing a new level of sophistication to their scams.



**As awareness is the first step in reducing your risk, here are two fraud trends to look out for this year.**

**Impersonation scams:** Criminals often pretend to be trusted sources, like government officials, bank staff, law enforcement or even a family member to trick you into providing money or confidential information. Now fraudsters are using voice cloning and computer-manipulated images or videos, making impersonation scams even harder to detect. As this type of scam continues to evolve, it's important to keep your guard up. Some experts recommend using a short and generic voicemail to deter robo-callers from capturing your name or voice and having a personal password to use with loved ones to verify you're speaking to the right person.

**Social engineering scams:** These scams usually increase during times of economic challenge when people may be more vulnerable and fall for promises of easy money. They happen when fraudsters use details they may already know about you to manipulate your emotions and get you to share confidential information. That's why it's important to be cautious about what you share online, and never feel pressured to respond. If you receive an unsolicited call, email or text asking for money or your information, hang up or delete it.

Learn more about how to spot the signs of common scams and find tips to keep your money and information safe at [antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca](http://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca)

# Know how to deal with toluene dangers

Toluene, a common solvent used in various industries, requires careful handling because of its health hazards and flammability.

A clear, colourless liquid that vaporizes when exposed to air at room temperature, toluene has a sharp and sweet smell, which is a sign of exposure. Aside from breathing it in, you can be exposed to toluene by getting it on your skin, splashed into your eyes or swallowing it.

Symptoms of toluene exposure include irritation of the eyes and nose, weakness, exhaustion, confusion, euphoria, dizziness, headache; dilated pupils, discharge of tears, anxiety, muscle fatigue, insomnia, numbness or tingling of the skin and dermatitis.

Toluene exposure also can cause liver and kidney damage.

Breathing high levels of toluene during pregnancy has been shown to result in children with birth defects and to retard mental abilities and growth. There is evidence that exposure to toluene at work is associated with spontaneous abortion.

Substituting a safer material is seen as the best way to protect against toluene exposure.

Where substitution is not feasible, ventilation is the most important protective measure to limit the inhalation of toluene vapours. Ventilation can be a combination of local exhaust, such as spray booths or enclosing and exhausting processes where toluene is evaporating, and room ventilation to capture those vapours that escape containment.

## Here are some more safety precautions:

- Use the smallest amount of the product that will get the job done.

- Make sure the room ventilation in the area workers are using the material provides the air volume required by your local building code.

- Spray application should be done in a spray booth with local exhaust ventilation and no ignition sources in the area.

- If the use of toluene or materials containing toluene causes wetting of the hands, impervious gloves should be used. Toluene is likely coming in contact with workers' skin if the gloves used to protect against toluene wear out quickly, get holes or become discoloured. Neoprene or nitrile gloves are preferred.

- Keep all sources of ignition, including open flames, sparks, and smoking materials, away from areas where toluene is used or stored.

- Store toluene in a cool, well-ventilated area away from heat, sparks and flames. Use appropriate containers that are tightly sealed.

- Avoid storing toluene near oxidizing agents or strong acids as it can react violently.

- Have spill kits readily available in case of accidental spills. Absorbent materials such as vermiculite or spill pillows can be used for containment and clean-up.

- Immediately report large spills or leaks to the appropriate personnel and evacuate the area if necessary.

- Use appropriate handling equipment such as drum pumps or funnels to transfer toluene between containers. Avoid dropping or mishandling containers.

- Label all containers clearly with the contents and appropriate hazard warnings.

## How to tell if you have arthritis in your hands and fingers

(NC) If you're feeling aches and pains in your hands, it might not just be fatigue. Different kinds of arthritis affect the hands and fingers differently. In all cases, the pain can burn, ache or feel sharp and restrict your range of motion, making daily tasks more difficult. Your hands and fingers may also feel stiff, especially in the morning. Discover the telltale signs of arthritis and how to tackle it head-on.

### Signs of arthritis in the hands and fingers:

**Osteoarthritis:** swelling and twisting of joints at the bottom of the thumb, the middle knuckles and the knuckles closest to the fingertips.

**Rheumatoid arthritis:** pain, swelling and inflammation in the knuckles closest to the palm of the hand as well as the wrist.

**Psoriatic arthritis:** swelling in the entire finger or across multiple fingers.

If you're experiencing signs or symptoms of arthritis, speak with your health-care provider and get diagnosed promptly. Your health-care provider may perform a variety of tests and exams to assess your symptoms and rule out other forms of hand or finger pain, such as carpal tunnel syndrome.

### How to protect your joints:

- Take breaks to avoid holding your hands in the same position for long periods of time.
- Spread out fine-motor tasks over several days instead of one.
- Use both hands to perform tasks and lessen pressure on a single hand.
- Slide objects across a counter or table instead of gripping or lifting them.
- Use assistive devices and kitchen tools that are easy to grip.
- Replace doorknobs and taps with lever-style handles.
- Prop up a book or tablet to read rather than holding it.

It's also possible to strengthen your hands and fingers by doing "range of motion" exercises, which can be found online through Arthritis Society Canada. Try applying mineral oil to your hands, putting on a large pair of rubber dish gloves and immersing your hands in a pan of hot water while you go through the exercises for five minutes or so.

If self-care strategies aren't enough to deal with pain from arthritis in your hands and fingers, talk to your health-care provider about other options.



## Living with lactose intolerance

Lactose intolerance is a common condition affecting many Canadians. According to the Canadian Digestive Health Foundation, it is estimated that about 7 million Canadians, or approximately 20% of the population, are lactose intolerant to some degree.

Living with lactose intolerance doesn't mean you have to completely eliminate dairy from your diet. There are still plenty of options available that are low in lactose or lactose-free. Some dairy alternatives include lactose-free milk, almond milk, soy milk, and coconut milk. Additionally, there are lactose-free yogurt and cheese options available in many grocery stores.

Other sources of calcium and vitamin D, important nutrients found in dairy products, include leafy greens, fortified plant-based milks, nuts, seeds, and fortified tofu. It's also helpful to look for products labeled as "lactose-free" or take lactase enzyme supplements before consuming dairy products to help digest lactose.

When living with lactose intolerance, it's important to avoid or limit high-lactose dairy products such as milk, ice cream, custard, and soft cheeses. It's also essential to carefully read food labels, as lactose can be found in unexpected places like processed meats, soups, and baked goods.

By making informed choices and being mindful of your dietary needs, it is possible to manage lactose intolerance effectively and still enjoy a varied and nutritious diet. Remember, consulting a healthcare professional or a registered dietitian can provide personalized guidance and support in managing lactose intolerance.

However, following a lactose-free diet to lose weight is not recommended unless you have been diagnosed with lactose intolerance. Eliminating dairy solely for weight loss purposes can lead to potential nutrient deficiencies and may not necessarily result in sustainable weight loss. It's important to remember that dairy products can be part of a balanced diet for those who can tolerate lactose.

According to HealthLink BC, cutting out dairy products without a medical reason can deprive you of essential nutrients and protein that are important for overall health. Instead of focusing solely on excluding dairy, it's advisable to maintain a well-rounded diet that includes a variety of food groups to meet your nutritional needs.

Weight management is best achieved through a combination of balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, and overall lifestyle habits. Prioritize your health and well-being by making informed decisions that support your body's needs.



# Know the safety basics for trench work

Trenches are narrow excavations deeper than they are wide and can pose serious risks if not properly managed.

The walls can collapse suddenly and without warning, giving workers no time to move out of the way. Small amounts of dirt might not seem treacherous, but one cubic yard can weigh more than 1,300 kilograms (3,000 pounds) – about the weight of a small car or more than a compact excavator.

Flooding and contact with buried service lines supplying utilities such as natural gas and electricity are also among the serious risks workers can face.

Comprehensive safety measures and strict adherence to regulations can significantly reduce the chance of death, injury and damage associated with trenching work.

**In general, trenches that are 1.2 metres (4 feet) deep or greater require a protective system unless the excavation is made entirely in stable rock. The factors to consider include:**

- Soil type, which determines the strength and stability of trench walls.
- Water content of soil.
- Depth of cut.
- Surcharge loads (e.g., spoil, other materials to be used in the trench).
- Other operations in the area.

Always check the legislative requirements in your jurisdiction related to the use of protective systems. Some jurisdictions have not defined soil types but do require preventive measures when an excavation reaches a certain depth or proportion.

When planning the excavation, it is essential to locate, identify, mark and de-energize any underground or overhead services and utilities.

**Here are some more important safety precautions:**

- Ensure the work site is free of debris and excavated soil and check surrounding areas for hazards that can affect soil stability, such as vehicles, equipment, buildings and structures.
- Consider weather conditions (such as rain) that can affect trench stability.
- Test for hazardous gas, vapours, dust and oxygen levels before entering the trench and continue testing oxygen levels as needed.
- Prevent falls into the excavation with barriers or guardrails.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment as needed.
- Determine if the trench is considered a confined space.
- Ensure safe access and egress into and out of the trench with ladders, ramps or stairways within 7.5 metres (25 feet) of lateral travel.
- Plan for adverse weather conditions.
- Do not place the sections of pipes, piles of spoil, unused tools, and timber and other materials within 1 metre (3.5 feet) of the trench's edge.
- Do not overload heavy equipment near the trench.
- Do not work under suspended or raised loads and materials.
- Have a worker above ground to help in case of emergency when anyone is in the trench.
- Ensure there is first aid equipment at the site and that an emergency plan and rescue procedures are in place.

## Working safely with forklifts

Forklifts are powerful and versatile machines that can perform many tasks in different work environments. However, they can also pose serious risks to the operator and others if they are not used correctly. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), forklifts are involved in about 10% of all workplace injuries and fatalities in Canada. Most of these incidents are caused by operator error, lack of training, or inadequate supervision.

That's why it's crucial that anyone who operates a forklift receives proper training and certification from a qualified instructor.

**Here are a few reminders on how to operate a forklift safely:**

- Before starting the forklift, conduct a pre-operational inspection to check for any defects or damages. Report any problems to the supervisor and do not use the forklift until it is repaired.
  - Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as safety shoes, gloves, and hard hat. Fasten the seat belt and adjust the seat, mirrors, and controls to your comfort and visibility.
  - Follow the manufacturer's instructions and specifications for the forklift. Do not exceed the load capacity, speed limit, or lift height of the forklift.
  - Drive the forklift with care and caution. Keep a safe distance from other vehicles, pedestrians, and obstacles. Use the horn, lights, and signals to warn others of your presence and intentions. Slow down and stop at intersections, corners, and blind spots. Do not drive in reverse unless necessary and use a spotter if the view is obstructed.
  - Load and unload the forklift properly. Ensure that the load is stable, secure, and balanced on the forks. Do not lift or lower the load while the forklift is in motion. Do not tilt the forks forward or backward unless the load is fully lowered. Do not travel with the load raised above the operator's eye level.
  - Park the forklift safely. Lower the forks to the ground and apply the parking brake. Turn off the engine and remove the key. Do not leave the forklift unattended or in the way of traffic or fire exits.
- If you work in an area where forklifts are present, you need to be aware of the potential hazards and take precautions to avoid them. Here are some tips:**
- Pay attention to the signs, markings, and barriers that indicate the forklift zones and routes. Do not enter these areas unless you have a valid reason and permission.
  - Be alert. Do not assume that the operator can see you or hear you. Make eye contact with the operator and communicate clearly. Do not walk behind or beside a moving forklift. Do not stand or work under a raised load or forks.
  - Keep your distance. Do not try to pass or overtake a forklift. Do not walk or stand between a forklift and a fixed object. Do not touch or lean on a forklift or its load.



# Understanding foot ailments from improper safety footwear

For many workers safety footwear is not just a compliance requirement; it's a critical line of defence against workplace hazards. However, when safety footwear doesn't fit correctly or is old and worn out, it can lead to a range of foot ailments that may not only hinder your ability to work but also pose long-term health risks.

**Improperly fitting safety footwear can cause several issues, ranging from temporary discomfort to chronic conditions. Some common foot ailments include:**

**Blisters and calluses:** Caused by excessive friction and pressure, these can lead to more severe skin lesions if left unchecked.

**Corns:** Hardened layers of skin that can become painful, often developing on the toes or sides of the foot from tight footwear.

**Plantar Fasciitis:** Inflammation of the band of tissue that runs across the bottom of your foot, often due to poor arch support.

**Bunions:** Bony bumps that form on the joint at the base of the big toe, which can be exacerbated by narrow-toed shoes.

**Ingrown toenails:** When the corners or sides of toenails dig painfully into the skin, often caused by pressure from ill-fitting shoes.

**It's essential to be vigilant and recognize the early signs of foot**

**ailments. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) suggests we look for:**

**Persistent pain.** Discomfort that doesn't subside after taking off your shoes may indicate a problem.

**Changes in skin or nail appearance.** Redness, blisters, calluses, or changes in nail color or thickness can signal an issue.

**Altered gait.** If your shoes cause you to walk differently to avoid pain, they're likely not the right fit.

**Swelling.** Any unusual swelling in the feet or ankles can be a sign of strain from poor footwear.

**To prevent these ailments, workers should:**

**Ensure shoes fit properly.** Safety footwear should be snug but not tight, with enough room to wiggle your toes.

**Replace worn out shoes.** Regularly inspect and replace safety shoes that show signs of wear and tear.

**Choose the right shoe for the job.** Different work environments require different types of protection. Consult with a professional to find the best option for your needs.

For more detailed information on foot safety and prevention of related injuries visit [ccohs.ca](http://ccohs.ca).



# Cleaning mistakes to avoid at home

Avoiding common cleaning mistakes can make your cleaning routine more effective and prevent potential damage to your home.

**Here are some key mistakes to avoid according to hgtv.com and marthastewart.com:**

- 1. Using dirty cleaning tools.** Ensure your cleaning tools are clean before you start. Dirty cloths, mops, and brushes can spread bacteria and dirt rather than remove them.
- 2. Not cleaning before disinfecting.** Cleaning removes germs physically, while disinfecting kills them chemically. Always clean surfaces to remove dust and dirt before using disinfectant for it to be effective.
- 3. Rubbing stains instead of blotting.** Rubbing a stain can spread it and push it deeper into the material. Blot stains with a clean cloth to draw the residue out.
- 4. Wiping surfaces too soon.** Disinfectants need time to work. Read the product label to determine the recommended contact time for sanitizing or disinfecting.
- 5. Cleaning surfaces with sponges.** Kitchen sponges can harbour bacteria. Use a clean microfiber cloth or disinfect your sponges regularly.
- 6. Not cleaning under furniture.** Dust and allergens accumulate under furniture. Use a vacuum or dusting mop with an extension to reach these areas.
- 7. Cleaning from bottom to top.** Start cleaning from the top and work your way down to prevent re-cleaning surfaces as dust and debris fall.
- 8. Harsh cleaners.** Harsh cleaners can damage surfaces over time. Opt for gentler, natural cleaners when possible.
- 9. Not reading product descriptions.** Always read product descriptions and follow directions to avoid damaging surfaces or creating harmful chemical reactions.



# Maintaining a clean and tidy workspace

Cleanliness and organization often take a backseat to the demands of daily tasks. However, maintaining a clean and tidy workspace is crucial for not only personal well-being but also for fostering a productive and safe work environment.

An untidy workspace can present numerous hazards that may not be immediately apparent. Cluttered areas can lead to increased stress and anxiety, as the chaos of the environment can reflect on an employee's mental state.

Moreover, disorganization can pose physical risks; it's easier to trip over loose items or knock over stacks of papers, which can lead to injuries or damaged equipment. From a health perspective, a workspace that isn't regularly cleaned can become a breeding ground for bacteria and viruses, contributing to higher rates of sickness among staff.

**Once you've tidied up, maintaining that cleanliness is key. Here are some tips to help keep your workspace clean:**

- 1. Designate a place for everything.** Use organizers, shelves, and drawers to ensure that everything has a home. This makes it easier to find what you

need and keeps clutter off your desk or workspace.

- 2. Implement a clean-as-you-go policy.** After finishing a task, take a moment to put away tools and materials. This habit prevents clutter from accumulating.
- 3. Regular cleaning schedule.** Set aside time each week to clean your workspace. Wipe down surfaces, sanitize commonly touched items, and organize your papers.
- 4. Go digital when possible.** Reduce paper clutter by utilizing digital files and communication methods when feasible.
- 5. Personalize responsibly.** While personal items can make a space feel more comfortable, they should not contribute to clutter. Keep decorations minimal and organized.

By following these tips and understanding the hazards of an untidy workspace, we all can contribute to a healthier, safer, and more efficient workplace.

## Tips for navigating financial stress

(NC) Feeling anxious about money is normal, but it doesn't have to be all-consuming. There are simple steps you can take to reduce stress and build more confidence in managing your finances.

### Here are six steps to help lower your financial stress:

#### Understand your spending habits:

Knowing how your money is spent is an important part of making more informed financial decisions. It can help you determine what's really worth spending money on and where you could cut back.

**Create a budget:** Start by organizing your spending into key categories, such as housing, bills and entertainment, then set a realistic spending limit that aligns with your monthly earnings. Revisit and revise your budget as income or expenses change.

**Build an emergency fund:** Having money set aside for an emergency, such as home repairs, medical bills or unexpected travel, can make a big difference in easing financial stress. While the size of your emergency fund will depend on your income and ability to contribute, it's important to consistently set money aside for emergencies and unexpected expenses.

**Chip away at debt:** Consolidating your debt may be a smart move that saves you time and money. For example, if you have balances on multiple credit cards or loans, you could save on interest costs by consolidating your debt to a line of credit with a lower interest rate.

**Talk about your finances and create a plan:** Simply talking about your finances and creating a financial plan can also help you feel more in control of your money. Consider speaking with a financial advisor who can provide guidance, answer questions and help you build a plan that works for you.

**Maintain your physical and mental wellbeing:** Depression and anxiety are common side effects of financial stress, so it's important to maintain your physical and mental health. Simple things like going for a walk, seeing friends and family, and eating a healthy meal can help lift your spirits and make you feel more able to take control of your money.

# What is a pinched radial nerve?

A pinched radial nerve, medically known as radial nerve compression or radial tunnel syndrome, occurs when the radial nerve is compressed or squeezed as it travels through the arm. The radial nerve is responsible for controlling the movement of the triceps muscle at the back of the upper arm and is involved in extending the wrist and fingers. It also provides sensation to part of the hand.

Pinched radial nerve is often confused with carpal tunnel syndrome. Both can cause pain, numbness, and tingling in the arm and hand, but they have different causes and locations. Carpal tunnel syndrome occurs when the median nerve, which runs through the wrist, is compressed by swollen tendons or other structures. Radial tunnel syndrome occurs when the radial nerve, which runs along the outside of the elbow, is irritated, or entrapped by muscles, bones, or other tissues. While both conditions can be triggered by repetitive motions, radial tunnel syndrome is more likely to affect people who perform forceful twisting or bending of the forearm, such as carpenters, plumbers, or musicians.

While exact statistics are not readily available, radial nerve compression is considered a relatively rare condition. Globally, superficial radial nerve compression affects only 0.003% of the general population each year.

**The causes of a pinched radial nerve can vary, but they often include physical trauma, such as a fracture in the upper arm bone, or from repeated activities that strain the nerve. Other causes can include:**

- Sleeping with your arm in an awkward position.
- Pressure from leaning on the arm over the back of a chair.
- Improper use of crutches.
- Long-term constriction of the wrist, such as from wearing a tight watch strap.
- Health conditions like diabetes or kidney disease that may lead to nerve compression due to inflammation or fluid retention.

### Prevention strategies focus on reducing the risk factors associated with nerve compression. These include:

- Avoiding repetitive arm and wrist movements that can strain the nerve.
- Ensuring proper form and technique when engaging in activities that involve the arms.
- Taking breaks during activities that require extensive use of the forearm or wrist.
- Using ergonomic tools and supports, such as wrist splints, to reduce pressure on the nerve during activities or sleep.

A pinched radial nerve can be a painful and debilitating condition, but with proper awareness and preventive measures, individuals can reduce their risk of developing this condition. If symptoms do arise, it is important to seek medical advice promptly to prevent further nerve damage and to explore treatment options.



# Ways to avoid drowning risks

Our safety meeting today reminds us to think safety when we are around water.



We live in a country abundant with natural resources, including many large bodies of water. These waterways offer many opportunities for recreation, tourism, and economic activities. However, they also pose significant risks for drowning, especially for people who are not familiar with the water conditions, currents, weather, and safety measures.

According to the Canadian Red Cross, drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional death among Canadians under 60 years of age, and the second leading cause among children under 5. Most of these deaths were preventable, as many victims did not wear life jackets, did not swim within their abilities, or did not follow the safety rules.

There are many jobs that involve working around water, such as lifeguards, swim instructors, aquatic therapists, marine biologists, divers, fishermen, sailors, coast guards, and water quality technicians. These jobs require different levels of skills, training, and certifications, depending on the nature and risks of the work. Working around water can be rewarding, but also challenging and dangerous, so it is important to follow specific safety

rules and regulations, and to wear the appropriate protective equipment, such as life jackets or PFDs, helmets, gloves, and wetsuits.

**Here are a few general tips to keep in mind when you work or play near water. You should always be aware of the potential dangers and take precautions to protect yourself and others:**

- **Wear a life jacket or a personal flotation device (PFD) whenever you are on or near water.** A life jacket can keep you afloat and prevent you from sinking if you fall into the water or lose consciousness. Make sure your life jacket fits properly and is approved by Transport Canada. Do not rely on inflatable toys, air mattresses, or water wings as substitutes for life jackets.

- **Never swim alone.** Always have a buddy or a lifeguard with you when you go into the water. If you are swimming in a natural body of water, stay within the designated swimming area and avoid swimming near boats, docks, or currents. If you are swimming in a pool, follow the rules and regulations of the facility. Do not swim if you are tired, cold, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- **Learn how to swim and perform basic lifesaving skills.** Swimming is a valuable skill that can help you enjoy water activities and prevent drowning. You should also learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid in case of an emergency. You can take swimming and lifesaving courses from certified instructors or organizations such as the Canadian Red Cross, the Lifesaving Society, or the YMCA.

- **Be aware of the water conditions and the weather.** Before you go into the water, check the temperature, depth, clarity, and currents of the water. Avoid swimming in cold, murky, or fast-moving water, as they can impair your ability to breathe, see, and swim. You should also check the weather forecast and avoid water activities during storms, high winds, or lightning. If you notice any signs of bad weather, get out of the water immediately and seek shelter.

- **Know what to do in case of an emergency.** If you or someone else is in trouble in the water, call for help and try to reach the person with a long object, such as a pole, a rope, or a branch. Do not enter the water yourself unless you are trained and equipped to do so. If you must perform a rescue, approach the person from behind and secure them with a life jacket or a PFD. Bring them to the shore or a safe place and check their breathing and pulse. If they are not breathing or have no pulse, start CPR and call 911.

Remember, enjoying the water on those warm summer days is fun, but it's important to think of our safety and the safety of our coworkers and family too.

Thank you for your attention today.

① A person who is drowning should be approached from the front.

True      False

④ You should always be aware of the potential dangers around water.

True      False

② A life jacket or a PFD can be used to secure a person who is drowning.

True      False

⑤ A person who is drowning may panic and pull the rescuer underwater.

True      False

③ You should avoid swimming in cold, murky, or fast-moving water.

True      False

⑥ A person who is drowning should be given mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in the water.

True      False

ANSWERS: 1 - False, 2 - True, 3 - True, 4 - True, 5 - True, 6 - False

Date of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Finish Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Have meeting attendees sign this sheet:


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