

Time for a break?

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Feeling irritable, anxious, angry, frustrated and mentally and physically exhausted? Maybe you need some time off.

The benefit of taking a short break or a [vacation](#) is the subject of a study by University of Queensland tourism researcher Dr Jan Packer from the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law.

"Previous studies have suggested that in the course of a working week, our capacity to continually focus our attention becomes depleted," Dr Packer said.

"This leads to a loss of concentration, errors in performance, irritability, and feelings of stress - we become mentally fatigued."

"These patterns have serious health implications, with long-term stress being linked to high blood pressure, heart disease, depression, anxiety or even death."

Dr Packer said that although it was commonly believed that short breaks and vacations helped us recover from the stresses of daily life and work, very little academic research had been done to examine the restorative benefits of holidays.

"Both individuals and the tourist industry will benefit from this research," she says.

"It will demonstrate the need for people to take a break, and will suggest

strategies that people can use to make sure they get the best possible results when they do get away."

Studies have shown that many Australian full-time [workers](#) work long hours, feel consistently time-pressured, and are too busy to take their recreation leave.

"My research is not seeking to find a cure for cancer," she said.

"The condition I am concerned about is more common than cancer, the cure is a lot easier to find and the medicine a lot easier to take."

Dr Packer's study proposal, Taking a break: the restorative benefits of short breaks and vacations, has earned her a UQ Foundation Research Excellence Award.

Provided by University of Queensland

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