

Physician burnout eroding sense of calling

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(HealthDay)—For physicians across specialties, burnout is associated with reduced odds of a sense of calling, according to a study published online Feb. 8 in the *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*.

Andrew J. Jager, from the American Medical Association in Chicago, and colleagues surveyed U.S. [physicians](#) across all specialties to examine the correlation between degree of [burnout](#) and physicians' sense of [calling](#). A single-item measure was used to assess professional burnout, while six validated true-false items were used to evaluate sense of calling, defined as committing one's life to personally meaningful [work](#) that serves a prosocial purpose.

The researchers found that 28.5 percent of the 2,263 physicians who completed surveys reported experiencing some degree of burnout. Compared with physicians who reported no burnout, those who were completely burned out had lower odds of finding their work rewarding, seeing their work as one of the most important things in their lives, or thinking that their work makes the world a better place (odds ratios, 0.05, 0.38, and 0.38, respectively) compared with physicians reporting no burnout symptoms. Burnout also correlated with reduced odds of enjoying talking about their work to others, choosing their work life again, or continuing their work without being paid if they were financially stable (odds ratios, 0.23, 0.11, and 0.3, respectively).

"Physicians who experience more burnout are less likely to identify with medicine as a calling," the authors write. "Erosion of the sense that medicine is a calling may have adverse consequences for physicians as well as those for whom they care."

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