

# The health risks of long work weeks

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(HealthDay)—A 40-hour work week may seem normal to some and like a vacation to others. But a study in the *American Journal of Industrial Medicine* shows that consistently surpassing this standard can be

detrimental to your health.

Researchers found that working 61 to 70 hours a week increased the risk of coronary [heart disease](#) by 42 percent, and working 71 to 80 hours increased it by 63 percent.

That's an important finding because heart disease is the leading cause of death worldwide, with more than half a million deaths each year in the United States alone, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A separate study, published in *The Lancet*, found that people who work long hours have a higher risk of stroke than those working standard hours.

All this overtime may not even lead to increased productivity because long hours can actually decrease your efficiency. Germany boasts the largest economy in Europe, yet the average worker only spends 35.6 hours per week on the job.

Working less may not seem realistic at first, but there are steps you can take to help make it a reality.

First, get more sleep at night. This will give you the energy to be more productive during the day and get you out of the office sooner.

Next, create an organized list of tasks for each day. Check off each item when completed to give yourself the motivation to get through your day more efficiently.

Then remind yourself that working fewer hours will give you more free time in the short term and decrease health threats to give you a higher quality of life in the long term.

**More information:** The American Heart Association has tips for increasing [wellness at work](#) to make your time on the job a healthier experience.

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