

# Supporting Heart Health at Work

## The case for supporting heart health



Every **8 minutes**

someone in the UK dies from coronary heart disease.

*British Heart Foundation*



**One** in four

employees are worried about developing heart disease.

*Health at Work Report*



Working **55+** hours a week

increases the risk of dying from heart disease by **17%**.

*WHO*



**7.6** million

people are living with heart and circulatory diseases in the UK.

*British Heart Foundation*

Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) is when the walls of the arteries become furred up with fatty deposits and the heart's blood supply starts to become blocked or interrupted. Lifestyle changes can reduce the risk.



Quit smoking



Sleep well



Eat healthily



Be more active



Reduce stress

## Symptoms of a heart attack

A heart attack (when blockages reduce oxygen to parts of the heart) is much less dramatic than a cardiac arrest (when the heart stops beating, and the person loses consciousness). This means employees might dismiss the warning signs when this is still a medical emergency.

### Symptoms can vary but include:

- Feeling lightheaded or dizzy
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick
- Overwhelming feeling of anxiety (like a panic attack)
- Chest pain – a feeling of pressure, heaviness, tightness or squeezing across your chest
- Pain in other parts of the body – it can feel as if the pain is spreading from your chest to your arms (usually the left arm, but it can affect both arms), jaw, neck, back and stomach
- Coughing or wheezing



## Five ways employers and managers can help:

1

**Educate** – make sure employees are aware of the symptoms of heart disease and heart attacks.

2

**Empower** – encourage employees who don't feel right to see their GP or Occupational Health.

3

**Prevent** – support employees to quit smoking, eat well and reduce stress to reduce risks.

4

**Adjust** – make reasonable adjustments to enable those with a heart condition to stay in work.

5

**Assess** – consider providing free blood pressure, cholesterol and blood tests to identify those at risk.

Contact us if you would like a free consultation to discuss ways to boost heart health at your organisation:



01925 227 000



info@pamgroup.co.uk



www.pamgroup.com

## Closing the heart health gender gap

Women can experience heart attacks in a much more subtle way than men, without the widely publicised chest pain. This means they are 50% less likely to get the right diagnosis, and treatment, after a heart attack.

**Twice as many UK women die of coronary heart disease as Breast Cancer every year**  
(Compared to 36% of men).

**47% of women will experience heart failure, stroke or death within 5 years of a first heart attack.**

