

# 5 Ways to Manage Work pressure Whilst Pregnant

When you're juggling a job as well as a growing bump, the stress levels can shoot up. Pregnancy can change how you approach work in a number of ways, but looking after your health and your baby's should always be the priority. Take a look at five tips to help you manage



Work can be stressful at the best of times, but if you're pregnant, worries, concerns, tiredness, and physical symptoms can add a lot more stress to the mix.

From suffering from morning sickness to the overwhelming tiredness pregnancy can bring, here are some easy ways to listen to your body, do the best for you and baby, and still get your work done.

## Allocate Breaks in Your Diary

More than ever before, now is the time to look after your body and your mental health. Pregnancy is a time when you need to make time for yourself and recognise when your body is telling you to slow down.

Whether you're sitting at a desk all day or doing a job where you're on your feet a lot, allocating set breaks in your day around your work could give you the time out and respite you need. If you have a manager, don't be afraid to have a chat about allowing yourself a few small breaks throughout the day, so they're aware of your intentions.

Look at your daily timetable and consider when would be a good time (for you and your team) for you to take a break from the screen and go for a short walk or head to a common area to sit somewhere neutral for a few minutes. You might find that these small but significant breaks could give your mind and your body the time it needs to keep stress levels down, helping you be more productive at the same time.

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## Ask About Flexible Working

If the last two years have taught us anything, it's that if there's a will, there's a way. So many of us have had to learn how to work from home, and many companies have adopted a work from home status.

If this is something your company did during the pandemic, then speak to your manager about the possibility of continuing to work from home, or, working from home for a set number of days each week.

In the early weeks of pregnancy, when morning sickness and tiredness are rife, you might find it easier and less stressful working from home, where you're close to the loo (essential when battling morning sickness), and you don't have to feel the pressure of dashing across an office every few minutes.

You could suggest playing things by ear, and if you find in your second trimester you're feeling stronger, reducing your work from home days.

## Organise Your Workload

You probably feel like you need to get a certain amount of work done, or tasks finished before you go on maternity leave, and this extra pressure can really add to your stress levels.

Being as organised as possible with your workload can help take the strain away, while also allowing you to get as much done as possible.

Tasks are always more manageable when you deal with them one at a time. If you have a huge to-do list, take a breath and a step back. Write down everything that you need to tackle (you can do this daily or weekly depending on your workload) and list each task in order of priority.

Once you see it all written down, you might find it easier to manage. Complete each task one after the other and cross them off as you go. If you find your health is still suffering from the amount of work needed, have a chat with your manager or your colleagues and discuss which tasks could be delegated. This way, the work gets done, you contribute as much as possible, and the weight is lifted from your shoulders.

## Ensure Risk Assessments are Carried Out

Whether you work from home, in an office, in a factory, or elsewhere, your employer needs to make sure a health and safety check is carried out when you're pregnant.

When you tell your employer about your pregnancy, they should assess the risks at work for you and your baby. Risks could include things like proper seating, screen, and desk positioning (and if you need any amendments to them for your comfort and wellbeing), heavy lifting and carrying, standing or sitting for long periods without breaks, long working hours, and exposure to toxic substances.

You also have legal rights, including paid time off for antenatal care, maternity leave, maternity pay or allowance, and protection against unfair treatment, discrimination, or dismissal because of your pregnancy.

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Knowing these measures are in place can help reduce your stress at work.

## Talk to your Employer or Manager

If you're comfortable doing so, talking with your employer or line manager can help with any concerns or worries you have. Ask about what your maternity leave will look like, and if there are any health or financial benefits you can expect.

Be upfront with concerns about your workload, or handover, share if you're worried about feeling out of touch when you're on leave, and ask questions about what your return to work will look like.

Discussing your worries not only shows that you care about your job, but it could help give you the support you need in the workplace.