

# Overworked Americans aren't taking vacation

By Patti Neighmond, NPR

A majority of Americans say they're stressed at work. And it's clear the burden of stress has negative effects on health, including an increase in heart disease, liver disease and gastrointestinal problems.

Still, though it's been known for years that periodically disengaging from one's everyday routine can reduce stress, most Americans don't take advantage of their days off. A recent poll conducted by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health finds about half of Americans who work 50-plus hours a week say they don't take all or most of the vacation they've earned.

And among respondents who actually take vacations, "30 percent say they do a significant amount of work while on vacation," says Robert Blendon, a professor and health policy analyst at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health who directed the survey. "So they're taking their stress along with them wherever they go."

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