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College of Family Physicians of Canada*

# GETTING OFF THE PATH TO BURNOUT

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**Wednesday February 22, 2023**

**12:00 to 1:00**

Physician burnout, first described in the 1970s, is recognized by the key features of emotional and physical exhaustion; cynicism and loss of enjoyment; and reduced work efficacy. Dr. Kostenuik explains how physicians can be empowered to recognize the precursors, individual and system risk factors, and early signs of burnout to prevent unnecessary suffering, illness, and adverse outcomes.

Addressable causes of burnout are grouped into three key areas: stress response, myths about resilience; and system issues. Acute and chronic stress lead to differing individual physiological and emotional responses. While some individuals will benefit from rest, others require activation, or social connection. It is important to tailor effective, evidence-informed approaches to individual needs. High resilience and traits such as perfectionism, a strong sense of social justice, and difficult saying 'no', actually contribute to burnout if physicians do not recognize their physical and emotional limits and boundaries. Solutions and approaches are presented to help physicians address their individual stress reactions, set healthier limits to function optimally in the "comfort zone", and address medical system and culture issues.

## Objectives

1. How to recognize early signs of physician burnout
2. How to recognize personal risk factors and system issues that increase the risk of burnout
3. How to use strategies to monitor and reduce stress, set healthier work limits, develop true resilience, and create better work-life balance to reduce the risk of burnout

