

Figure 2: Prevalence of work-related symptoms

**Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, and SBS**

A study in the United Kingdom found that reported work-related illness among office workers was not associated with self-reported job stress or negative perceptions of the office environment.

Alan Hedge, now of Cornell University, conducted the study while still at Aston University in the U.K. He distributed a questionnaire which 486 office workers (85% of the sample given the questionnaire) in six buildings completed. Three of the buildings were occupied by government agencies, three by private firms. They had various types of HVAC systems, although the descriptions of the systems are limited, and no other information about the buildings is included in this report.

The prevalence of work-related symptoms is shown in Figure 2. Lethargy, headache, stuffy nose, and dry throat were the most commonly reported symptoms. (A positive answer indicated that the symptom was experienced at least twice during the prior year and

that it abated when the employee was away from work.)

At least one work-related symptom was reported as occurring daily in 25% of the respondents, weekly in 31%, monthly in 13%, less often in 8%, and never in 23%. (See Figure 3.)

Hedge found that job satisfaction was not significantly associated with symptom reporting. He states that "workers are not reporting ill-

ness as a way of expressing dissatisfaction with their work." He also concludes that satisfaction with work does not compensate for symptoms attributable to the office environment.

Hedge did find that symptom reports correlated strongly with "negative perceptions of office environmental conditions, i.e., dissatisfaction with ventilation, temperature, humidity, and noise, and with self-reported job stress."

*For More Information*

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Alan Hedge 1988. "Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Work-Related Illnesses in Offices." *Proceedings of the Human Factors Society 32nd Annual Meeting*, Anaheim, California, October 24-28, 1988. Santa Monica: The Human Factors Society (P. O. Box 1369, Santa Monica, CA 90406). ♦

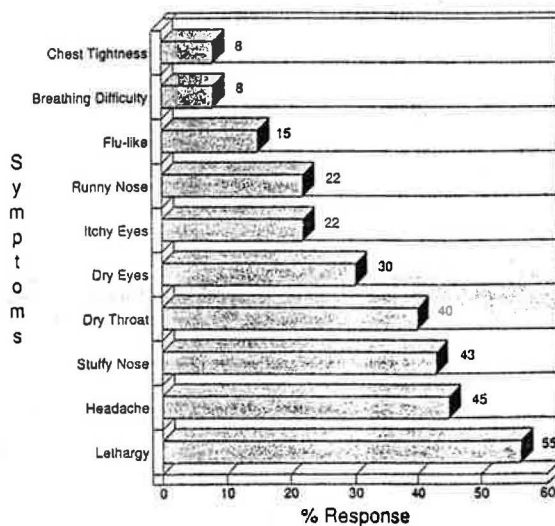


Figure 3: Frequency of reporting at least one work-related symptom