

DON'T LET ILLNESS DERAIL YOUR JOB SEARCH



It's just an **unavoidable fact** -- the stress of a prolonged job search can cause physical illness, that makes it even harder to find new work. If you have ever been unemployed for more than a few weeks, you know what I'm talking about -- cold and flu, depression, headaches, chronic tiredness. All these symptoms are triggered by the stress and worry of your job search, and the economic problems that come with being unemployed. But there are ways to fight back. **Take care of your physical health.** Concentrate on eating right and exercising. Take a walk every day -- this will help with both stress and keeping your immune system strong. If you already exercise regularly, then keep it up! And eat right -- this is not the time to be vegging on your couch eating Doritos all day. Stick to three healthy meals, and you're likely to improve your health and save money in a difficult financial time. **Take care of your mental health.** Stress reactions that worked so well for our evolutionary forbears on the Serengeti -- panic, anxiety, fear -- don't help us so much with modern problems. It's one thing to be concerned about your career and financial prospects, and quite another to paralyze yourself with negative emotions. Don't pretend you can deal with this on your own. Talk to friends, family members, clergy or professional advisers about your fears. If it's really bad, see a psychiatrist -- you don't have to be crazy to seek medical help. If your emotions are getting in the way of your job search, then please see a doctor. If you have no insurance or benefits, then look online for free help in your area. **Don't exaggerate your problems.** Yes, this is a very difficult time to be looking for work, and it's not helpful to pretend that it isn't. But if you convince yourself this is the end of the world, it may become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Commit yourself to your job search -- work on it every day. Open yourself up to the prospect of relocating, or changing careers, or taking on work outside your field that you may see as beneath you, even if just temporarily. America will get through this economic downturn. Your family will get through it. You will get through it.