

### **The Role of Health Risk Factors and Disease on Worker Productivity.**

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The costs attributed to employee health problems are usually measured by employers in terms of direct health care costs, such as medical plan claims. The measurement of employee health problems, which also produce indirect costs for employers, has been far less frequent. At best, studies have recorded one component of indirect health costs: the time lost to employee absenteeism and disability. This study includes a measure of the actual decrease in the productivity of employees while they are on the job, in addition to measures of absenteeism and disability. These three measurements were combined to produce a Worker Productivity Index (WPI). The WPIs of 564 telephone customer-service agents were correlated with the employees' number and type of health risks, as measured by a Health Risk Appraisal. Additionally, the WPI was also examined across different disease states in the same population of employees. As the number of health risks increased, an employee's productivity decreased. The nature of the health risk may also differentially affect the pattern of the decrease. Finally, disease states were also associated with different patterns of productivity reduction.