

MOVE MORE and SIT LESS at the office



Sitting for lengthy and uninterrupted periods during a working day has been associated with poor health and chronic disease.

To counteract the negative effects of prolonged sitting, guidelines recommend that office workers gradually work towards standing and moving for 2-4 hours during an 8 hour working day. Interchanging between standing, moving and sitting throughout the day helps maintain a flexible balance, which is optimal for employee and organisational health in the long term.

STATS: A panel of leading experts chaired by Professor Stuart Biddle, who reviewed the evidence on sitting for the report recommended taking "an active break from sitting every 30 minutes".

" Breaking up sitting time engages your muscles and bones, and gives all our bodily functions a boost – a bit like revving a car's engine "

- Professor Dunstan.

As an office-based worker from time to time, I do appreciate that meeting the recommendations in practice is no easy task.

Hence our help here now with some strategies that could be used to start to support office workers in achieving and maintaining the recommendations in a sustainable way.

#CHOOSE TONIC

Organisational strategies:

- Promote and encourage standing and walking meetings as part of normal working practice.
- Place printers and bins in a central location away from workstations.
- Promote and encourage the use of friendly walkways and stairwells.
- Introduce wireless headsets to enable employees to stand and move while on the phone.
- Install sit-stand height-adjustable workstations or desks for employees to use.
- Introduce height-adjustable hot desks that employees can share.
- Provide standing tables in communal areas, canteens and meeting rooms.
- Identify representatives as spokespeople to support employees in moving more and sitting less.
- Those in managerial positions should lead by example by also engaging in numerous strategies.
- Suggest, allow and encourage strategies for employees to move more and sit less.



Individual strategies:

- Instead of e-mailing or calling, walk over and talk to colleagues to deliver the message in person.
- Move your rubbish bin away from your desk so you have to get up more regularly to use it.
- If meeting with one or two people, try a walking or standing meeting instead.
- Use printers that are further away.
- Stand up while talking on the telephone or mobile phone.
- Stand to greet a visitor to your workplace or when conversing with a colleague
- Stand while sorting and filing paperwork
- Stand while you read
- Stand up at your sit-stand desk or workstation when checking e-mails or during formatting work



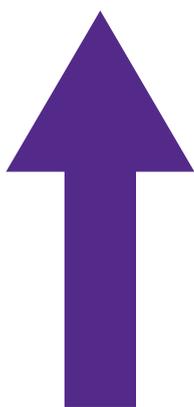
Individual strategies that can be used when taking a break from working:

- Stand up to get water more regularly
- Walk to a loo that is further away
- Use the stairs instead of the lift
- Use your lunch break to go for a walk



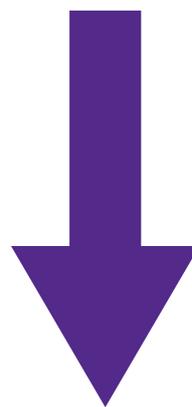
Organisations of all sizes can play a key role in ensuring that employees move more and sit less at the office. Why not be that progressive organisation who considers establishing a policy to normalise and emphasise a moving more and sitting less culture. This form of intent sends a strong message to employees regarding the cultural acceptability of being more active at work, and places organisations at the forefront of innovation to optimise worker health and wellbeing.

Benefits of moving more and sitting less:



Improve your:

- Energy levels
- Concentration, memory and alertness
- Work-life balance
- Fitness level
- Feelings about yourself and self-confidence



Reduce your:

- Stress levels
- Risk for injury at work
- Time off due to illness
- Risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and some types of cancer

Tips for success:

- Set a goal and create a plan to reach that goal.
- Start off slowly and build up to your goal. Small steps lead to successful goals.
- Be active with family and friends.
- Keep a pair of comfortable shoes at work.
- Build movement into your daily routine. It does not have to be one more thing on your "To-Do" list.
- Record your steps, time or distance.
- Stick to it! You need to try a new activity for about four to six weeks before the activity becomes a natural part of your routine, and you start to see some benefits.
- Have fun.

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