

Injury Prevention Challenge

Move More at Work

Even if you exercise the recommended 150 minutes a week, you may be causing harm to your body by spending too much time sitting behind a desk or behind the wheel of a car. In fact, researchers have now linked sitting for long periods of time to a number of health concerns including obesity, metabolic syndrome, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, excessive body fat around the waist, and abnormal cholesterol levels. So break up your day, move more, and make an impact on your health and well-being!

Follow these tips to get moving more at work:

- 1. Set an e-reminder.** Every hour stand up, march in place for a few seconds, stretch, and sit back down.
- 2. Take phone calls standing.** We may not be able to get the company to expense a stand-up desk, but we can all stand up to answer the phone.
- 3. Drink lots of water.** Not only is drinking eight glasses of water a day good for you, staying hydrated will naturally cause you to take more restroom breaks, increasing your daily step total.
- 4. Take the stairs.** This is a great way to get your heart pumping! You can also get an upper body workout if you're carrying a briefcase or bag.
- 5. Talk face-to-face.** Ignore the urge to call your colleague on the other side of the office. Instead, use the opportunity to add some steps and connect with your co-workers in person.
- 6. Take a lunch break.** Walk to a restaurant nearby or take your brown bag outside. Resist the urge to eat sitting at your desk.

LEARN MORE!

Do you sit too much throughout the day? Believe it or not there are health risks to a sedentary lifestyle. See how it could affect you at MayoClinic.com/sitting/expert-answers/FAQ-20058005



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Burn Calories at Work

Many people spend eight hours sitting at a desk for their job. This leads to a sedentary lifestyle and muscle deterioration, especially if you don't make time for exercise outside of work. You've already learned how to get moving during the work day—now it's time to strengthen your muscles with some of these desk exercises!

Arms

Tricep dips. Face away from your desk, with your hands planted on the edge. Take one step out and then bend at the elbows to lower your body. Straighten your arms to perform a full tricep dip. A shorter desk or a chair can help you go deeper into your shoulders, while a taller item will work your triceps.

Standing push-ups. Stand a few feet away from a wall and extend your arms straight so that your palms are flat against it. Perform a standing push-up, using as little help from your legs as possible.

Bicep flexes. While sitting at your desk, place your palms flat on the underside of your desk, so that your elbows are at a 90 degree angle. Press up against the desk as if you were trying to lift it, and hold for 10 seconds.

Legs

Seated leg raises. While sitting, flex your right foot and extend your leg until it is straight. It should be parallel to the floor. Hold your leg outstretched for 5 seconds before lowering and repeating on the left side. This will work your quadriceps.

Calf raises. Stand nearby a wall or desk to help with balance and raise your weight onto your toes, performing a calf raise. Repeat several times to feel the burn!

Desk squats. Standing up and then sitting back down in your desk chair is probably a move you perform several times throughout the day. This time, stand and sit repeatedly—and for an extra challenge, see how long you can hover over your chair in a seated position before actually sitting down.

Hamstring curls. Standing at your desk, shift your weight into your right leg, and then curl your left heel back toward the left buttock. Repeat several times on each leg.

Core

Shoulder squeezes. Pull your arms straight back, bending at the elbow, pinching your shoulder blades together. Hold the pulling motion for a count of three before repeating to work into your upper back and shoulders.

Ab contractions. Sitting at your desk, use your core to squeeze your abs in tight, pulling the belly button toward the spine and tucking in the tailbone. Hold the squeeze for 10 seconds before repeating.



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Stretch at Your Desk

We've all felt it. You stand up from your desk and walk to a meeting, a colleague's desk, or the restroom and your back and legs feel tight. You can tell you've been sitting down for too long, but you have to sit at your desk to get your job done. You may take a few seconds to stretch your back by leaning forward and back, but it is not enough to reverse the effects of sitting down.

Ideal stretching

Ideally, you should get up from your desk or stretch every 60-90 minutes of sitting. It may seem strange to stretch at work, but your body will feel and function better by adding a few stretches to your work day routine.

Ways to stretch and strengthen at your desk

Neck. Sit tall in your chair, relax your neck, and drop your head toward your chest. Tilt your right ear toward your right shoulder. Return chin to chest and tilt left ear toward left shoulder.

Shoulders. Lift your shoulders as high as possible, then release slowly. Roll your shoulders forward and backward slowly.

Chest. Sit on the edge of your chair, grip the back of your chair and straighten your arms. Keep your body straight and gently lean forward.

Upper back. With palms away from your body, straighten both arms forward and look down at your lap.

Lower back. Stand with your knees slightly bent. Bend forward from your waist and place hands on your thighs. Pull your stomach in, arching your back toward the ceiling, pause, and then release and flatten your back.

Hamstrings. Stand with your right leg forward, heels on the floor, and toes up toward the ceiling. Shift all of your weight on our left leg. Bend your left leg slightly and keep the right leg straight. Bend from your waist reaching your arms toward your right toe. Repeat on the other leg.

Stress reliever. Stand up and take a deep breath. Reach your arms over your head then exhale bringing your arms back down.

Repeat all of the exercises 5 times, holding each stretch for 20 seconds.

LEARN MORE!

For more ideas about how to stretch at your desk, check out: SunflowerSpa.net/stretch-at-your-desk



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The Right Way to Sit

Many of us work in an office setting where we sit at a computer all day. The seated posture can cause aches and pains, especially in your back and core. You can avoid injury by sitting in the right position and arranging your desk correctly. Reference the image below while following these five tips:

1. Adjust your chair

Adjust your chair height so that your knees are level with your hips. You also want to be able to use the keyboard with your wrists and forearms straight and parallel with the floor. This can help prevent repetitive strain injuries. Your elbows should be by the side of your body, so that the arm forms an L-shape at the elbow joint.

2. Accentuate your curves

Your spine has many natural curves that need to be supported as you sit. If the chair doesn't support your lower back's curve, you can place a rolled towel or small pillow behind the gap. There are many ergonomic chairs and support cushions available.

3. Rest your feet flat on the floor

If your feet cannot reach, use a footrest (be creative, you can use books, a box, etc.), which lets you rest your feet at a level that's comfortable. Try not to cross your legs too much, as this can cut off circulation and cause hip problems.

4. Place your screen at eye level

Your computer screen should be directly in front of you. A good guide is to place the monitor about an arm's length away, with the top of the screen roughly at eye level. If the screen is too high or too low, you'll have to bend your neck, which will be uncomfortable and cause bad posture.

5. Create easy access to items you use most

Position those frequently used objects, such as your telephone or stapler, within easy reach. Avoid repeatedly over-reaching or twisting to get what you need. If you spend a lot of time on the phone, try exchanging your handset for a headset. Repeatedly cradling the phone between your ear and shoulder can strain the muscles in your neck.

