

## **How to stay healthy while at work**

It seems like we are spending more and more time at work, and less and less time thinking about our health and diets. Often we tell ourselves, "I have no time to exercise" or "I can't eat healthy at work". But just a little prep-time and a little reorganizing our days can make a huge difference in our health and fitness level. The following tips will keep stay healthier at work:

### **Tip #1 Stretch at your desk**

A lot of people overlook the benefits of stretching, while you aren't going to lose a great deal of fat, you will increase your metabolism. It will also help you to relax; stress has been directly associated with weight gain, so relaxing your muscles will have a positive impact on your health. Try to fit some of these stretches along with relaxed breathing into your daily schedule:

- Sitting tall in your chair, stretch both arms over your head and reach for the sky. After 10 seconds, extend the right hand higher, then the left.
- Put your left ear to your left shoulder; hold for 10 seconds, than do the same on the right side.
- Sit facing forward, then turn your head to the left and your torso to the right, and hold for 10 seconds, than do the same to the opposite side.
- Sitting up straight, roll your shoulders slowly forward ten times then slowly backward ten times.
- Sitting up straight put your hands together and push them out in front of you as far as you can, hold for 10 seconds.

Repeat these stretches frequently throughout the day, don't wait until you are tired and stiff to do them, I suggest trying them once an hour.

### **Tip #2 Good posture**

During the day focus on good posture, slouching can lead to tension in the back and make it harder for the muscles to relax. Besides looking more professional and stronger, sitting up straight can help you avoid back pain, headaches, and tiredness.

### **Tip #3 Bring healthy snacks**

The work place can be full of sugary, fatty food; cake for someone's birthday, someone selling their daughter's Girl Scout cookies, leftover Halloween candy, and the list goes on and on and when you are hungry it is hard to avoid them. The solution is not to starve yourself, but instead to feed yourself something healthy. Studies found that even watching someone else eat can make you hungry, so bring vegetables, low fat crackers, or fruit so when the temptation of a sugary monster rears its head you can combat it with a healthy snack.

### **Tip #4 Pack your lunch AND breakfast**

Although a lot of us already pack a healthy lunch, most of us forget all about breakfast, and we end up grabbing a not so healthy donut or even going without breakfast. Recent research by the American Public Health Association (APHA) has shown that skipping breakfast greatly decreases metabolism, it found that even eating a sugary donut is better than nothing. But why not pack yourself something

healthy instead? A piece of fruit and a low fat muffin, or if you have a place to store food bring cereal and milk for the week.

### **Tip #5 Get out of the office**

Sitting behind a desk all day can drain us, both mentally and physically. Try getting out of the office, a short walk around the building at lunch time could do a lot for both your mental capability for the rest of the day and for your physical health.

### **Tip #6 Get moving**

We are made to move, not sit behind a desk all day, and as ergonomic as your desk or chair may be, sitting produces back pains, headaches, and listlessness. You become less productive, not to mention easily put on weight. Take every chance you have at work the get moving, try some of the following:

- Instead of emailing a co-worker, walk over to them.
- Stand reading your notes or talking on your phone rather than sitting in your chair.
- Volunteer to be the one who walks across the street to get the coffee or lunch
- Take the stairs! We have all heard this one a lot, and that is because it actually works! A simple walk up the stairs can do a lot for us, do it every chance you get. I do get the excuse sometimes that there are too many steps, and I wouldn't expect anyone to climb 30 flights of steps, so get off at the 28th floor and just climb two (maybe a month later get off at the 27th floor)!

### **Tip #7 Strength Training**

Staying fit at work doesn't just have to just involve stretching or quick aerobic bursts, with some care we can also do strength training at work too. Try these strength training suggestions:

- Sit straight up in your chair and tighten your abdominal muscles, hold for 5 seconds and repeat, over time you can build on this, holding for longer and more repetitions- this will help you get those great abs everyone is dying for.
- Do butt clenches the same way you would do your abs, as silly as it sounds it will help you get a firm bottom.
- Work your chest and shoulders by placing both hands on your chair arms and slowly lift your bottom off the chair. Lower yourself back down but stop short of the seat, hold for a few seconds.

Be creative, you can always find ways to work muscles in your office.

### **Tip #8 Get people to join you**

One last thing, whatever you do **DON'T LET THE FEAR OF EMBARRASSMENT KEEP YOU FROM STAYING HEALTHY AT WORK.** Chances are, your co-workers will admire your efforts, and might even want to join you. Maybe you can get them to go for a lunchtime walk or share in your healthy breakfast idea. Rather than be embarrassed, try to get some co-workers to join in your efforts- **STAYING HEALTHY IS SOMETHING YOU SHOULD BE PROUD OF!**