

Healthy Habits

Tips and resources for living well



This month: Employee Health and Fitness

Juggling work and life responsibilities is a challenge. But you don't have to give up on healthy habits, no matter how busy your schedule. May is Employee Health and Fitness Month, so in this issue, we'll show you how you can even improve your health on the job! You'll find out how to sneak in some exercise right at your desk, how to replace high-calorie lunches and snacks with healthier fare, and more.

Spice up your lunch! Make a Zesty Low-Fat Shrimp Salad

Spicy shrimp tossed with greens gives you energizing protein and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

- **1/2 pound** cooked shrimp meat, patted dry
- **1/4 cup** finely chopped celery
- **1/4 cup** diced cucumber
- **1/3 cup** fat-free strained Greek yogurt
- **Dash** of hot sauce
- **1 tsp.** lemon juice
- **Freshly ground** black pepper
- **1/4 tsp.** paprika

Combine ingredients in a small bowl. Serve on top of lettuce leaves. Or, stuff into a whole-grain pita lined with lettuce or spinach for the next day's lunch.

Snacking smartly at work

If you're trying to eat well, you know that the office can be a minefield of tempting, high-calorie, sugary foods that can throw your goals off track. Here's how you can sidestep those birthday cakes, holiday cookies and pastries often served at meetings—and boost your health at the same time.

Suggest that fruit and yogurt be served at your team's breakfast meetings.

Put healthy snacks in plain sight. Place a treat jar on your desk and fill it with dried fruits and nuts to nibble on (in moderation!).

Take a healthy beverage break with a coworker. Take a brief walk to the break room and brew a cup of chamomile tea—it's relaxing and calorie-free.

Offer to bring a fruit or veggie tray to potluck lunches. This ensures you'll have healthy fare on hand.

Walk your way through meetings

Having a brainstorming meeting? Instead of reserving a conference room, consider planning a walking meeting, where your team can talk while walking. It's a fun way to fit exercise into the workday, while still focusing on the task at hand (make sure to take short breaks to write down your notes). A walking meeting could energize the group, reduce stress, and increase team members' daily physical activity. Plus, the change of pace may inspire some fresh, creative ideas!

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Take a stand. Reduce your “sitting” time... starting now!

Did you know that excessive sitting can double your odds for developing diabetes and heart disease?

Aim to stand up whenever possible. And, try to fit in simple movement—even right at your desk. It can help both your health and productivity improve.

Try these ideas:

1. **Stand up** every 20 minutes.
2. **Pace back and forth** while talking on the phone or reading reports.
3. **When sitting, stretch** your neck from side to side.
4. **Try this stretch while seated:** Lift one leg off the seat, extend it out straight, hold for 2 seconds; lower your foot (stop short of the floor) and hold for several seconds. Switch legs. Repeat with each leg 15 times.
5. **To relieve stress and feel refreshed:** Inhale deeply and shrug your shoulders, moving them up high by your ears. Hold. Release and drop. Repeat 3 times.

Set reminders on your electronic calendar, cell phone, or leave a note on your desk to remind yourself to stand up and move regularly—at the very least, once an hour.

[Source: National Institutes of Health]

Feeling stressed? Tips to release tension

When you're dealing with a challenging project at work, it's natural to feel stressed. Stress can have an impact on your physical and mental well-being, so be sure to take steps to reduce it.

Try these quick, easy stress-busters:

- **Adjust your posture.** When you're tense, you're more likely to hunch over your desk. Sit up straight to put less pressure on your neck and spine.
- **Try self-massage.** Cross your arm over your chest, reach to the opposite shoulder and give yourself a brief massage.
- **Just breathe.** Close your eyes and take a few slow, deep breaths. Focus on clearing your mind of worries.

QUIZ: How much do you know about staying healthy at work?

1. **Reducing the time you sit may help:**
 - a. Improve heart health
 - b. Reduce risk of diabetes
 - c. Boost productivity
 - d. All of the above
2. **Where can you find more information about exercise and healthy habits?**
 - a. Grocery Store
 - b. Your Wellness Website
3. **Which is the best way to sit at your desk?**
 - a. Hunched over
 - b. Sitting up straight
4. **Potential benefits of a walking meeting are:**
 - a. Increased physical activity
 - b. Increased energy
 - c. Decreased stress
 - d. All of the above