

# How to Exercise Right at Work

## BUSINESS & ADMINISTRATION (OFFICE WORKER)

Working in business and administration is categorised with long hours sitting in an office, often in front of a computer.

Office workers often spend much of their day sedentary and operating office equipment, and while these activities pose little harm when done for short periods of time, constantly performing these types of activities can have harmful effects on your health.



### + COMMON HEALTH RISKS FOR OFFICE WORKERS

The biggest concern for those that work in business and administration sector (office workers) is the harmful effects of sitting for long periods of time. Australian statistics show that 68.5% of the workforce are either sedentary or have very low levels of activity. Essentially, we go to work and sit for eight hours and that fact is having serious effects on our health.

Sedentary occupations can lead to increased risk of injuries, overweight and obesity and over long periods of time, sedentary occupations can contribute to chronic diseases and early mortality.

Other common risks faced by office workers are musculoskeletal disorders from repetitive use of the hands to operate computers, sort paper or use office equipment, and neck and back pain from prolonged sitting and increased sedentary time.

### ? WHY IS EXERCISE SO IMPORTANT?

Regular activity helps improve your overall health and fitness. It also reduces your risk for many chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

When people have a prolonged period of time living within a restricted range of motion (e.g. they sit, stand, walk and sleep for years on end, without taking their joints through a full range of motion) then problems arise, things like; poor ankle dorsiflexion, knee flexion, hip flexion/extension, thoracic extension, scapula

retraction, arm flexion. It can turn into a vicious cycle where people aren't moving because it hurts and it hurts because they aren't moving.

Other research finds restricting sitting time to less than three hours each day might boost an adult's life expectancy by an extra two years. Sit to stand desks are now common throughout office-based environments, however while they are very good at improving your standing time and reducing your time spent sitting, research now tells us that people outside of the office are now less active. So it's important not to give up your physical activity after work!



### EXERCISE RIGHT RECOMMENDS

#### GET OUTSIDE AND ACTIVE DURING YOUR LUNCHBREAK

For most office workers lunchtime is a built-in break during the day, and poses less risk of being derailed by things in the evening such as housework, last-minute dinner arrangements, or plain old fatigue after a long day at work.

Take a walk around the block, or take part in lunch time stretches/exercise sessions. A great way to relieve stress and use of your lunchbreak to help fit exercise into your busy schedule!

Like brushing your teeth before bed, your pre-lunch power walk will become second nature the more you do it.

#### THRUST IT OUT

A big problem with all the sitting we do is that it shortens our hip flexors and shuts our glutes off, ultimately limiting our ability to

perform hip extension. Even if you're not sitting a lot, lengthened hip flexors and powerful glutes will do wonders for your ability to walk proficiently. Firing out some hip thrusts will help activate those glutes and lengthen tight and inhibiting hip flexors muscles.

#### INCREASE YOUR INCIDENTAL EXERCISE, REDUCE YOUR SEDENTARY TIME

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Walk to the printer/fax/photocopier/rubbish bin
- Talk face-to-face instead of email
- Start incorporating standing and walking meetings to decrease sedentary behaviour
- When sitting for long periods, set an alarm for 5 minutes every hour, to rise and move more.
- Walk during your morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea breaks
- Park your car further away from your destination and walk the distance.