

Fall Fitness Challenge 2013



Reducing Sedentary Behaviors: Sitting Less and Moving More

Adapted from: American College of Sports Medicine

Due to technology's sedentary seduction, people can now spend the majority of their waking day in a chair watching TV, working at a desk, playing video games, ordering take-out and delivery, reading, shopping, banking, or eating a meal at a table. Current research findings are revealing that too much sitting during the day is detrimental to a person's health.

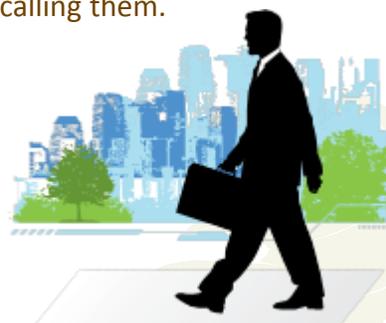
Although the human body is made to be in frequent motion, people can sit for many hours at a time, day after day. Two major contributing factors to the obesity epidemic in the U.S. are a lack of physical activity and sitting too much.

Why is Too Much Sitting so Harmful?

Scientists think that too much sitting impairs the body's ability to deposit fat from the blood stream into the body. These constantly elevated blood fats are a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. In addition, researchers have observed that too much sitting during the day impairs the functioning of the body's healthy cholesterol, known as HDL cholesterol. HDL is the scavenger cholesterol that cleans up plaque sticking to arteries. If healthy cholesterol loses its ability to clean arteries, it will also increase a person's risk of cardiovascular disease. All studies are indicating that moving more during the day, in addition to getting the daily 30 minutes of moderate activity on a daily basis, is necessary to lower one's risk of cardiovascular disease and other causes of mortality.

Get Active Action Plan Ideas for Work

1. Take a walking break every time you take a coffee break.
2. Do some leisurely walking with your co-workers after you eat lunch together.
3. Stand up and move whenever you have a drink of water at work.
4. Whenever possible stand up as opposed to sitting down.
5. Stand up and talk on business phone conversations.
6. Stop at the park on your way home from work and take a walk.
7. Walk to a co-worker's desk instead of emailing or calling them.
8. Walk briskly when headed to meetings.
9. Take the stairs whenever you can.
10. Take the long route to the restroom at work.



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Get Active Action Plan Ideas for Daily Life

1. Take a family walk after dinner.
2. Get a pedometer and start tracking your steps. Progress up to 10,000 steps or more a day.
3. Walk your dog daily.
4. Replace those Sunday drives with Sunday walks.
5. When watching TV, stand up and move with every commercial break.
6. Walk up and down escalators instead of just riding them.
7. Run or walk fast when doing errands.
8. Pace the sidelines at your kids' athletic games.
9. Walk up and down the shopping aisles at the store before you shop.
10. Pick up a new active hobby, such as cycling or hiking.
11. After reading six pages of a book, get up and move a little.
12. Try standing and moving whenever you are talking on a cellphone.
13. Play with your kids 15-30 minutes a day.
14. Dance to your favorite inspiring music selections.
15. Walk briskly in the mall.

A Complete Physical Activity Program

A well-rounded physical activity program includes aerobic exercise and strength training exercise, but not necessarily in the same session. This blend helps maintain or improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness and overall health and function. Regular physical activity will provide more health benefits than sporadic, high intensity workouts, so choose exercises you are likely to enjoy and that you can incorporate into your schedule.

Physical activity recommendations for healthy adults, recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (working hard enough to break a sweat, but still able to carry on a conversation) five days per week, or 20 minutes of more vigorous activity three days per week. Combinations of moderate- and vigorous intensity activity can be performed to meet this recommendation.

In addition, strength training should be performed a minimum of two days each week, with 8-12 repetitions of 8-10 different exercises that target all major muscle groups. This type of training can be accomplished using body weight, resistance bands, free weights, medicine balls or weight machines.

