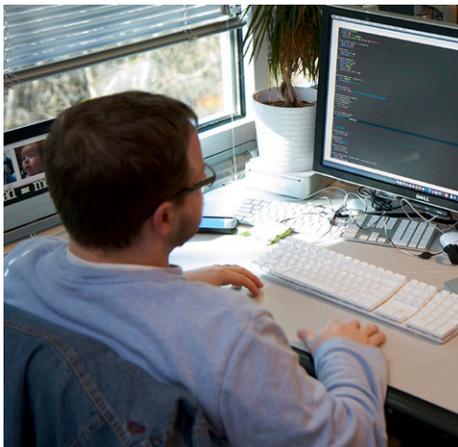


Sitting is the New Smoking

22 Tips for Sitting Less and Moving More

Alice Henneman, MS, RDN
Extension Educator

Sitting for prolonged periods of time has been called the “new smoking” due to increased health risks.



Tavis Isaacs, www.flickr.com

Sitting for prolonged periods of time increases many health risks.

According to a study in the 2015 *Annals of Internal Medicine*, “Prolonged sedentary time was independently associated with deleterious health outcomes regardless of physical activity.” Outcomes associated with sitting for prolonged periods of time included an increased incidence of heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

The Canadian researchers’ conclusions were based on pooled data from 41 international studies.

“More than one half of an average person’s day is spent being sedentary — sitting, watching television or working at a computer,” said Dr. David



Derek Adkins, www.flickr.com

Walking is an easy way to move more.

Alter, Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, and senior author of the study.

Exercising for a half hour daily helps, however, it isn’t enough if we’re inactive for the remaining 23 plus hours. The effect was most pronounced in people at lower levels of physical activity than at higher levels.

Here are some tips to get you started sitting less and moving more. Check those you could do — you may be surprised how easy it is to add more activity to your day.

- Take a 1–3 minute break every half hour or so during the day to stand and move around. You could fit this in with some of the activities cited below. For example, taking the stairs, walking during a break or noon time, etc.
- Pace during phone calls.
- Walk over to your colleagues’ desk to talk versus emailing, instant messaging or calling them. Stand once you get there.

- Schedule a regular 5–10 minute physical activity break into your day, such as 10 minutes of activity at 10 a.m. and again at 2 p.m.
- Drink more water — it’s good for your body and you’ll walk more going to the restroom. Use the bathroom farthest from you.
- Have standing meetings. An added benefit is standing meetings are usually shorter and more to the point.



Weldon Kennedy, www.flickr.com

Sitting on an exercise ball and fidgeting is one way to move more.

- Use some type of fitness tracker that counts your steps or miles. Work up to 10,000 or more steps (about 5 miles), a guideline recommended by several health organizations.

Continued on next page

- Set a timer to remind you to get up and move. There are several apps (both free and at a slight cost) that signal when a time you designate has passed. Also, some wearable fitness trackers remind you when to move. Use your favorite search engine to locate some possibilities, using such phrases as: “apps that encourage moving more” or “fitness trackers that encourage moving more.”
- Use a wearable fitness tracker or smartphone app that lets you form a group with friends on your device (tablet, computer, smartphone). The motivation of others moving may motivate you also.
- Participate in physical activities with your children, such as bike rides, Frisbee throws and walking the dog together.
- Walk up and down the soccer or football field while your child is playing.
- Change channels on the TV manually. Get up and move during commercial breaks on television. Stand up part of the time while watching TV.
- Park your car farther from your destination.
- Use the stairs.
- Cook more of your meals — you’ll move more than getting your meal at a drive-through restaurant or sitting in a restaurant. Plus, you may save some money and eat healthier.
- Tidy up your house more often. Vacuum more and keep your carpet cleaner. Mop that kitchen floor before your feet start sticking to it. Scrub down your bathroom — clean floorboards, wash windows, remove grime that sticks around faucet joints.
- Pack a sack lunch and save some time during your lunch break for a walk.
- Buy a jogging stroller and jog or walk with your child.

Take a break from sitting and mix together this quick dip. Stand and move around more as you peel and chop nutrient-rich veggies to serve with it. Choose some whole grain crackers.

SALSA YOGURT DIP

Mix two parts plain yogurt with one part salsa (for example, mix 1 cup plain yogurt with 1/2 cup salsa)



Alice Henneman

- Sit on an exercise ball and fidget while you work.
- Walk down every aisle at the grocery store whether you need to or not. But stick to the grocery list of healthy foods.
- Wear comfortable shoes that encourage walking.
- Form a work group for walking – maybe a stroll to the library over lunch break.

The bottom line: This isn't an issue to be taken sitting down!

References:

- Biswas A, Oh PI, Faulkner GE, Bajaj RR, Silver MA, Mitchell MS, et al. *Sedentary Time and Its Association With Risk for Disease Incidence, Mortality, and Hospitalization in Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis.* *Ann Intern Med.* 2015;162:123-132. doi:10.7326/M14-1651
- University Health Network (UHN). (2015, January 19). *Sitting for long periods increases risk of disease and early death, regardless of exercise.* ScienceDaily. Retrieved June 29, 2015 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/01/150119171701.htm

This is a peer reviewed publication