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Stay Active While Working from Home

Working from home has many perks, but it may leave you at risk for developing a sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy habits. It may be easy to forget about exercise when you're home all day. The good news is you're in control of keeping yourself active while also getting your work done; it all comes down to building healthy habits throughout the day.

This article explores the importance of an active lifestyle and how to incorporate daily movement into your work while still getting your work done.

The Importance of Being Active

The Department of Health and Human Services recommends that most adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week, such as brisk walking or light housework. Additionally, it's recommended to do muscle-strengthening activities two or more days per week that target major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms). The good news is that you can spread your activity out during the week, so you don't have to do it all at once.

Regular physical activity is vital for your health. It has numerous health benefits, most significantly, helping maintain your weight and reducing your risk for high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, heart attack and stroke.

In addition to the physical benefits of working out, research finds that exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve mood and overall mental health. When you exercise, your body releases endorphins, which can help you healthily cope with daily stressors.

Tips for Staying Active

Some physical activity is better than none. Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. However, staying active while working from home can require self-discipline. Consider the following strategies for avoiding inactivity during your remote workday:

- **Try a fake commute.** A fake commute involves using a typical commute time period to transition and mentally set yourself up before working. Without a standard commute, you could exercise before or after your workday.
- **Schedule your workout.** If a fake commute doesn't fit with your remote work routine, find ways to plan your exercise and stick to it. Building exercise into your daily planner can help you stay on track. If something comes up and you have to change a fitness appointment, reschedule it right away.
- **Designate a workout spot.** Find a room or corner in your home to be your workout space. You don't need that much space for an efficient workout, just enough to move around a bit or lay down an exercise mat.
- **Move every hour.** It's important not to be sedentary for long periods of time. Set a timer or use apps that remind you to stand up and move for a few minutes. Use that movement to grab a healthy snack, refill your water cup, or walk up and down the stairs.
- **Go digital.** Many apps, videos and on-demand programs are available to help you stay committed to exercise. Online memberships or streaming services can provide classes and workouts in the comfort of your home during workday breaks or lunchtime. You could even invite family and friends to join to increase accountability. Your employer may even offer such digital health and exercise resources.
- **Keep it simple.** If you already have hand weights, a yoga mat or exercise bands at home—great! If not, get creative with body-weight exercises or consider using household items to add resistance to your routine.

Consistency is key with any fitness routine. Staying active at home makes you more likely to adopt fitness habits and live a healthy lifestyle. Health experts recommend talking to your doctor before starting new exercise programs.

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