



ARE YOU MOVING ENOUGH AT WORK? CREATE A WALKING GROUP!

It is estimated that 60% of Canadians spend their entire workday at their desk.

To lead a healthy lifestyle, it is recommended that adults get 150 minutes of heart-pumping action each week. Learn how to take physical activity into your workplace by starting a walking group and adding movement into your workday with these healthy tips.

BUILD MOVEMENT INTO YOUR WORKDAY BY:

- Starting a walking group at work
- Taking stretch breaks throughout the day
- Have standing, or walking, meetings
- Take the stairs
- Build more walking and exercise into your commute



Most of us start walking when we're young and often times overlook its great benefits. Studies have shown that walking can have a significant impact on disease risk and some health conditions with practically no negative side effects – and not to mention, there's no cost!¹

According to Harvard Health, walking for 21 minutes a day (totaling 2.5 hours a week) can cut heart disease by 30%¹. It has also been shown to reduce the risk of cancer, diabetes, lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and even impact our mental health¹. In a 2014 study by the University of Utah, for every minute of brisk walking that women did throughout the day, they lowered their risk of obesity by 5%¹. Moreover, frequent micro breaks from sitting improve levels of comfort, work performance, and reduce the risks of musculoskeletal injuries².

Walking can impact your mental health as well. It can help relieve everyday stressors, provide mood-elevating endorphin levels to increase, and help clear your mind¹.

If you are feeling like you do not have enough time to exercise outside of working hours and you are spending that 60% of your workday at your desk, it may be time to start a walking group at work.

TIPS ON CREATING A WALKING GROUP:

- Take anywhere from 15-30 minutes to grab a group of coworkers and go for a walk
- Some great times to do this include a morning break, before or after lunch and in the afternoon. Many of us are likely familiar with the post lunch slump that happens around 2pm where concentration decreases and we may feel we need another coffee just to keep us awake. This is a

great time to go for a walk to get the blood pumping and energize our bodies and mind so that we can continue to work sharply the rest of the day.

- Specify your frequency. This can be done any day of the week, multiple times a day! Find a schedule that works for you and your coworkers
- Build multiple routes that you can take so as to enjoy different scenery
- Raining outside? Too cold in the winter? Some other ways to build movement into your workday include:
 - Walk to the printer
 - Facilitate a standing meeting
 - Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator
 - Take micro breaks and walk around the floor or work area
 - Go out and grab a healthy lunch somewhere in walking distance
 - Take breaks when you complete a task
- Add movement into your commute by parking farther away or taking an extra walk around the block before getting into or leaving work

Walking groups are a great way to build great relationships with coworkers as well. Our relationship with co-workers can have a significant impact on our day to day and overall work experiences (see Factors that Impact Job Satisfaction article). Lastly, you don't need to do vigorous exercise to start feeling results - work on building a movement into your workday today.

REFERENCES

1. "Walking for Health". Harvard Medical School. 2018. https://www.health.harvard.edu/special-health-reports/walking-for-health?utm_source=HHPBlog&utm_medium=link&utm_content=related-text&utm_campaign=referral
2. "Sitting and Standing at Work" Cornell University Ergonomics Web. <http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/cuesitstand.html>