Active Working

Maximizing Activity in Sedentary Work

"It's an ergonomic keyboard. Once you learn how to use it, it will increase your speed by six percent!"
Introduction

There’s no running away from it: The more you sit, the poorer your health and the earlier you may die, no matter how fit you are.

Is sitting the new smoking?
Is Sitting the new Smoking?

• Sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity linked to heart disease, obesity, diabetes, etc.
• Heart Disease and Stroke leading two causes of death according to World Health Organization and Australian Bureau of Statistics
• According to a study from SPPH, every hour of seated TV watching cuts 22 minutes from our lifespan
• One hour at the gym is not enough to counteract 9 hours of inactivity at work
• Australians spend an average of 9-11 hours of waking time in seated posture/sedentary activity
Benefits of Increased/Regular Physical Activity

• Maintain healthy body weight
• Lower blood pressure/maintain low blood pressure
• Reduce risk of some cancers
• Reduce risk of heart disease and stroke
• Reduce stress and anxiety and risk of developing depression
• Improve quality of life
• Stronger immune system
• Increased energy
• Regulates sleeping patterns
How does Prolonged Sitting affect Lower Back Pain?

Research indicates:

• Prolonged sitting may lead to increased lower back pain\textsuperscript{1,2}
• Decrease in spinal range of motion after 90 min of sitting\textsuperscript{3}
• Increase in stiffness\textsuperscript{3}
• Loss of natural spinal curve\textsuperscript{4}
• Increased spinal loading

1. Hartvigsen et al., 2000
2. Lis et al., 2007
3. Dunk & Callaghan, 2010
4. Mork & Westgaard, 2009
Ways to Maximize Physical Activities at work

- Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design
- Increasing Activity through Work Practices
- Active Meetings
- Making time for regular Individualized Physical Activity
Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design

- During construction/refurbishment projects, select furniture/equipment that may facilitate increased activity
- Consider height adjustable desks, standing desks or standing hot desks
- Design break-out, group meeting areas that differ from standard table and chairs
Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design

• Height adjustable desks
  
  - order through P&F Furniture
  - 1200 x 800 mm straight desk: ~$1000
  - hand crank or electronic mechanism
Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design

• Fixed-height Standing desks
  - Not “one size fits all”
  - Order through P&F Furniture
  - Price varies depending on size
  - May need chair with taller gas lift
Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design

Standing Hot Desks

• Consider (one or a bank of) standing desks in your school/division that are shared among all staff
• Sign-out sheets or rotating roster
• Staff can use for an hour or two and return to their seated workstations
• Consider standing workstations for specific tasks (i.e. checking email, database access, etc.)
Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design

Reception Desks

- Reception desks tend to be taller than standard desk height (bench height or mid-range)
- May require taller chair that makes it difficult to get into and out of
- Consider making the reception desk a standing workstation
- May be more efficient if reception role is rotational
- Seats provided if needed
Promoting Activity Through Workstation Design

Not Sure if Standing is for You?

Temporary Standing desks

• For cases of acute back pain/injury
• Platform constructed by furniture suppliers to raise height of keyboard/mouse
• Raise monitors using boxes or risers
• Order through P&F
• Cannot alternate between seated and standing postures- only standing
• Temporary solution only
Increasing Activity through Work Practices

Change the way you work

• Stand during telephone calls and when someone comes into your office to talk
• Walk to your colleagues office rather than emailing or telephoning them
• Park your car further away from the office or get off the bus a stop or two early and walk the rest of the way
• Take the stairs instead of the elevator
Increasing Activity through Work Practices

Change the way you work

• Drinking more water naturally increases toilet breaks
• Eat your lunch away from your desk
• Consider taking a walk over your lunch break
• Stand at the back of the room during presentations
• Move your bin away from your desk, requiring you to walk over to it
• Relocate the printer to another room to encourage short breaks and increase walking
Increasing Activity through Work Practices

Standing Meetings

• Keep the meeting short - less than 30 minutes
• Small groups work best, 5 participants or less
• Choose a “standing” location (i.e. no chairs, tall surfaces to write on)
• Schedule the meetings near the beginning of the day
• Set an agenda and follow it
• Use standing meetings to problem solve or gain feedback
• Standing meetings are great for action planning
Increasing Activity through Work Practices

Walking meetings

• Limit the meeting to six participants to ensure everyone is able to interact and communicate effectively

• Inform participants of walking meeting in advance so they can be prepared with comfortable footwear and clothing.

• Consider the weather by having extra umbrellas available

• Set an agenda beforehand

• Walking 2-3 people abreast facilitates easy conversation

• Select quiet trails to ensure everyone can hear the conversation

• Make sure the walking pace is comfortable for everyone
Making Time for Regular Individualized Physical Activity

• Take advantage of UQ Facilities and programming
• UQ Wellness Program-yoga, walking clubs
• Go to the gym on your lunch break
• Go for a walk during your morning tea or lunch break
• Walk/run/cycle to and from work
• Join a running group before or after work
Resources

Research Studies:
• Stand up Vic
• Stand up UQ
-Dr. Healy and Dr. Eakin
-UQ School of Population Health

Stand Up UQ Lunch Box Session:
Thursday 31 October
Forgan Smith E107
12:10 or 1:10
Resources

• Work Health and Safety Act (Qld) 2011

• Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

• JustStand.org:
  • Sitting time calculator

• Healthy Workers Initiative Queensland
  Department of Health and Ageing
Questions?

"It's called Ergonomics."