

Sit Less, Stand and Move More!

Tips to keep you moving throughout your day

We're sitting too much. Jobs that require sitting for long periods of time each day; TV, computers, video games, and reading for enjoyment; long commutes and convenient parking—we all sit too much. All of this sitting is dangerous—no, really!

More and bigger fat cells. Periods of inactivity cause our bodies to create new fat cells and more fat in our already existing fat cells, causing them to become larger. Just what we need.

TV watching is harmful. Watching just 2 hours of TV a day can double your risk of heart attack and 4 hours a day gifts you with a 50% greater risk of death from any cause.

Exercise isn't enough. The negative effects of chronic sitting and TV viewing are not cancelled out by exercise. Even an intense workout cannot counteract the harmful effects of inactivity.

So what is it about inactivity that is so harmful? This is what we know:

- When you sit, your metabolism decreases so that you burn 1 calorie per minute less than if you were standing. If you were able to stand instead of sitting or lying for 5 hours a day, you would burn 300 more calories a day (1 calorie per minute x 60 minutes x 5 hours).
- As you sit, your muscles weaken and electrical activity decreases. Sitting or lying for 24-hour period results in a 40% decrease in blood sugar uptake to the cells.
- As you gain weight from lower calorie needs and higher blood sugar levels, you become insulin resistant, stressing your liver, pancreas and other organs.
- Women who sit for 6 hours or more per day will see a 1% decrease in bone mass each year.
- The harm really adds up: sitting for 6 hours or more daily for 20 years can increase your risk of prostate and breast cancer by 30% and your risk of dying from heart disease by 64%.



Here's what you can do:

- Limit all sedentary leisure activities, TV watching, video games, computer time, etc, combined to 1 hour a day. That's pretty tough for a lot of us. Another option is to stand, rather than sit, while you do them.
- Find a high countertop and place your book there so you can stand while you read.
- Stand or pace while watching TV. This is also a great time to walk on a treadmill or ride a stationary bike.
- Have standing or walking meetings at work.
- Consider a stand up desk or a convertible desk, one that goes from a sitting to standing position, for work or computer time at home. These are quite reasonably priced and you can find several options online.

Though we have been stuffing them into classrooms and cubicles for decades, our **BRAINS** actually were built to survive in jungles and grasslands. **A LIFETIME OF EXERCISE** can result in a sometimes astonishing **ELEVATION** in **COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE**, compared with those who are sedentary.

John Medina
