

Desk-GETFITercise

CHALLENGE

Are you tired of sitting at your desk throughout the day? Do you feel tension in your neck and back? Do your muscles start to feel tight and your joints become stiff? These are all tell-tale signs that you need some desk-exercise! Exercising at your desk, or desk-ercising, is an easy way to fit fitness into your busy life. A mere 15-minutes of exercise or stretching at your desk (done twice a day to meet the U.S. surgeon general recommendations) can help you feel 100% better, resulting in a happier, more productive you! Try these tips next time you start to feel bogged down by any of the symptoms listed above:

Worksite cardio:

- Do one minute of jumping jacks at your desk. For a low-impact version, which is gentler on the joints, raise your right arm in the air and tap your left toe to the side while keeping your right foot on the floor. Alternate sides and continue for one minute.
- Run in place for one minute. For a low-impact version, simply march in place for one minute, but remember to get those knees up!
- Walk briskly around your office or floor for 10-15 minutes or try delivering messages within your building in person rather than emailing or calling.
- Walk the stairs in your building for 10-15 minutes or 5 times a day. For a greater challenge, try taking the steps 2 at a time!

Strength training:

- Stand up and do squats at your desk while waiting for a webpage to load, a fax to be sent, a sheet to be printed, etc. Feel free to hold onto your desk or the wall for support.
- While sitting in your chair, lift and extend one leg out straight. Hold this for 2 seconds before lowering your foot so that it is hovering above the floor. Hold this position for another 2 seconds before completely lowering your foot to the floor. Switch legs and repeat 15 times with each leg.
- Do 15 desk push-ups 3 times a day. To do these seated, place your hands on the desk and back up your chair so that only your hands are touching the desk (arms should be relatively straight). Bend elbows to lower yourself slowly towards the desk until your chin is almost touching the desk. Straighten arms to return to start position. Be sure to keep back straight and hinge at waist to avoid injury.

Desk stretches:

- Stretch both arms over your head for 10 seconds. After 10 seconds, extend one arm higher for another 10 seconds, and then switch arms.
- To stretch your neck, reach your right arm over your head and place on the left side of your head. Pull your toward your right so that your right ear meets your right shoulder. Hold this for 10 seconds, and then switch sides using your left arm to pull.
- To relieve back tension, sit up straight facing forward. Turn your torso to your right side and look to your left. Hold for 5 seconds, and then switch sides. Repeat 15 times on each side.
- While sitting up straight, try to touch your shoulder blades together. Hold for 5 seconds, relax, and then repeat.
- Squeeze buttocks, hold for 5 seconds, relax, and then repeat 15 times. Do the same for your abdominal muscles (squeeze, hold, relax, and repeat!).
- While these desk-ercises won't help you train for a 26-mile marathon, any bit of exercise counts and they will help you get through your work day. For more information on the desk exercises you see here plus additional "Exercise at Your Desk" tips, please visit www.webmd.com.