



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at Sullivan Benefits

Squeezing a workout into a busy schedule isn't always easy. But scattering one-minute workouts throughout your day can help combat the effects of long-term sitting—which can lead to a number of health concerns.

ONE-MINUTE OFFICE WORKOUTS

According to research, prolonged sitting can lead to a number of health concerns, including obesity, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, abnormal cholesterol levels and excess body fat around the waist. It may also increase the risk of death from cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Even if your job requires you to sit for eight or more hours, you can combat the effects of prolonged sitting with a variety of one-minute office workouts—right at your desk—to keep yourself active and improve your body's strength and flexibility.

For Lower Body Strength

Sit in your chair. Extend one leg out in front of you. Hold it straight for five seconds. Raise it as high as you can and hold for five more seconds. Switch legs and repeat, for a total of three times on each side.

For Your Core and Arms

Sit in your chair with your legs crossed in front of you (like a pretzel), and your feet on the seat. Place your hands on the armrests, engage your core and raise yourself a couple inches above the seat. Hold for 10 seconds. Rest a few seconds, and repeat five more times.

For Your Biceps

Sit tall with your abs pulled in. Hold a dumbbell or filled water bottle in one hand, with your arm stretched out straight and your palm facing the ceiling. Curl it up towards your shoulder and then back to the starting position 15 times. Alternate arms, and repeat. Complete one more set of 15 reps with each arm.

To Stretch Stiff Muscles and Relieve Tension

Sit straight, facing forward. Turn your head to the left while turning your torso to the right. Hold for 5 seconds. Keep alternating sides for a total of 60 seconds.

Every Little Bit Counts

The impact of movement—even a leisurely walk—can be compelling. The muscle activity needed to move the body triggers important processes related to the breakdown of fats and sugars. This burns more calories, which can lead to weight loss and increased energy. In contrast, these processes stall when sitting, and health risks increase. Standing and actively moving kicks the body's vital processes back into action.

When added up, every movement made throughout the day helps combat the effects of long-term sitting. The following are easy ways to incorporate movement into your workday.

- Stand while talking on the phone or while eating lunch.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Go for brief walks as often as possible. (Consider walking meetings, and walking over to your co-worker to ask a question instead of sending an email.)
- Ask your employer about the option of investing in a sit-to-stand desk.
- Walk or go to the gym during your lunch break.
- Replace your desk chair with an exercise ball for all-day core strengthening and reduced stress on the lower back.

Remember to consult with a doctor before starting any type of exercise regime.