



## Wellness monthly update from the Wellness committee

1 message

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### Why You Should Make Physical Activity a Part of Your Day

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Researchers have been investigating ways to reduce our risk of chronic disease and promote health for decades. While the right number may differ for everyone, at least 150 minutes per week is recommended. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' physical activity guidelines, adults should participate in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week, including at least two days of muscle-strengthening activities. Being active for up to 300 minutes per week has even greater health benefits. For adults that spend most of their day in sedentary or "baseline" activities such as standing and lifting lightweight objects, an increased level of activity may be desirable. This includes many adults who sit all day for their jobs as technology has replaced the need to do more physical work. Research shows that individuals who sit all day, even if they go to the gym for an hour, are at greater disease risk than those who are more active during the day. "Informal" physical activity such as walking while running errands or other activities can add up throughout the day and is beneficial to overall health.

#### What is physical inactivity?

Physical inactivity is anytime you are not standing or moving. Sitting at your desk or watching TV all fall into this category. Our health is impaired by how many hours we spend each day sitting, as well as the duration of those periods of inactivity.

Even those who exercise for 150 minutes each week aren't safe from the dangers of sitting for too long.

#### What are the risks?

Many parameters to assess disease risk include blood sugar, insulin, HDL (the good cholesterol), waist circumference, triglycerides and blood pressure. Researchers have also studied the relationship between sedentary behavior such as sitting and diabetes and heart disease. Studies have even investigated inactivity and risk of premature death. All of these outcomes can be negatively impacted by physical inactivity: The more you sit, the greater your risk for disease.

#### How can we reduce physical inactivity at home and at work?

While there is no published recommendation for "safe" sitting time yet, it may be helpful to move for at least 1 to 2 minutes of each hour of sitting in addition to 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. If your job is sedentary, you can break up that time with bits of activity to improve your health. Here are a few tips to get moving throughout the day:

- Park far away from buildings.
- Use a standing or walking desk.
- Take a brisk walk after lunch.
- Stand during phone calls.
- Drink enough water that you use the restroom often.
- Swim, bike, go for a walk or play lawn games instead of watching TV.
- Meet coworkers before or after school and walk outside or in the halls

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