

# Exercise at Work



Growing a  
*healthier workforce*

Many people suffer from musculoskeletal discomfort on a daily basis. Remaining still for prolonged periods of time can contribute to this.

Taking regular micro-breaks, has been shown to help ease discomfort as well as enhance mental concentration and performance, especially when taken every 20 minutes. This involves any change of position and can include simple tasks such as walking to the printer or standing at the photocopier.

## Desk exercises for micro-breaks



Shrug shoulders and let go



Move ear to shoulder



Look round over shoulder



Look straight ahead and tuck chin in



Tuck chin in and look down



Sit or stand: lift arms above head



Squeeze shoulder blades together



Turn upper body round from side to side, use arms or back of chair to hold



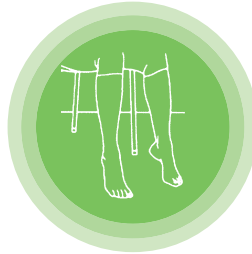
**Make a fist  
and then  
open fingers  
wide**



**Place one  
hand on back  
of wrist to  
stretch  
forearm**



**Straighten  
knee; pull  
toes up and  
down quickly**



**Lift heels up  
and down  
quickly**



**Lift heel to  
bottom**

## **Breaks**

You should try and be active on a daily basis and minimise the amount of time sitting for prolonged periods. There are many simple and small ways to break up sedentary time and introduce activity within your working day. For example:

- Get off the bus early and walk 20 minutes to work to burn nearly 60 calories.
- Take a 30 minute conference call standing up and burn 63 calories.
- Take the stairs instead of using the lift and burn 51 calories.
- Complete one of the walking routes around each hospital site, on the trust Health and Wellbeing webpage, they take 20-30 minutes and can burn 100 calories or more.

## Physical exercise

Exercise reduces the risk and helps the management of various conditions including stroke, diabetes and heart disease. It can also help improve mental health and self-esteem.

The Department of Health recommends:

- Moderate intensity exercise to be performed 30 minutes on at least 5 days per week. Examples include brisk walking or cycling.
- Alternatively, 75 minutes of vigorous intensity, for example running, swimming or sporting activities, spread across the week can provide comparable benefits.
- Muscle strength work for example exercising with weights or with your body weight should also be undertaken two days per week.

## Don't know where to start?

Set short term goals and gradually increase your exposure to exercise. There are various opportunities within the trust.

- Exercise classes held in the hospitals' gyms which can be found on the Health and Wellbeing section of the intranet. There is also information on discounts for local gyms.
- Use of the hospitals' gyms outside work hours for a small fee each year. Simply book an induction by phoning the relevant physiotherapy department.
- Walking at pace with your dog or with colleagues at lunchtime.
- Couch to 5K is often a good way to start if you want to take up running <https://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/c25k/Pages/couch-to-5k.aspx>

## We're here to help

If you need further information or advice, please contact the staff physiotherapy service telephone 01670 564010, internal extension 36010.