

Quick Tips on How to Get More Physical Activity Through the Day

Everyone knows that getting regular exercise is so important to their physical, mental, and emotional health. But not everyone knows how to fit in a fitness routine. Also, if you've been fairly inactive for a while, it can be hard to get moving.

If you want to make positive lifestyle changes that include increased physical activity, don't be afraid to start small. Even really small. Often, starting is the hardest part, and any movement is better than none.

While the ideas below are no substitute for actual aerobic exercise that gets your heart rate elevated, these basic ways to get more physical activity over the course of the day still help.

They get you moving more, and the effects add up over a week, a month, or a year. They also help you shift your mindset to one that favors being physically active over being physically passive. That, in turn, can help change your attitude, get you focused and motivated, and encourage you to exercise more.

So, implement as many of these ways to get more physical activity on a daily basis as you can. And start today!

Simple Ways to Move More During the Day

- Whenever possible, walk or ride your bike instead of driving or taking public transportation.
- If you do take the bus, get off a stop or two before you need to and go the rest of the way on foot.
- Park far from the entrance whenever you're in a parking lot.
- Take the stairs instead of riding the elevator or escalator; walk up and down instead of standing still when you do use an escalator.

- Stand rather than sit periodically; standing burns calories, works muscles, and is healthier for you than sitting.
- Bounce your legs up and down when you're seated.
- Get up and take a walk down the hall, up and down a flight of stairs, or around the block once in a while, or when you have to get up anyway (like to go to the bathroom).
- Go for a stroll on your breaks.
- Pace or walk around a little rather than stand still while you're waiting for something, talking on the phone, etc.
- Walk or jog in place while you're watching TV.
- Go over to people at work and at home instead of texting, calling, emailing them, etc.
- Keep things you want regular access to across the room (like your drink, your phone, the TV remote, and so on).
- Wear small weights that strap on to your ankles when you go out (at least when you're wearing pants or don't mind people seeing them).
- Play physically with your kid or dog more; take your dog on more or longer walks.
- Take family walks or bike rides when you're spending time together.
- Shop at the mall or plazas where you walk around instead of just taking the car from one store to another.
- Park and go inside instead of using the drive-through window at fast food restaurants, coffee shops, the pharmacy, the bank, etc.

- Clean the house more often; movements like scrubbing, dusting, sweeping, vacuuming, mopping, and moving things around to organize count too.
- Yard work is also good activity, so weed, pick up sticks, mow the lawn, rake the yard, etc.