

8 ways to stay fit at a desk job

By Karen Tolkkinen

Work a desk job long enough, and you can almost feel your hind end spreading. Some call it "office butt."

More than that, sitting all day makes fat puddle up around our middles and messes with our blood pressure and blood sugar levels. Our bodies weren't built to sit for extended periods, yet most of us work at a desk, or at least at a fairly sedentary job.

So what can we do to keep fit?

Connie Stolz-McDonald, an Alexandria-born lifestyle health mentor and author of "Healthy Lifestyle," and Heather Godfrey, an Alexan-

dria fitness trainer came up with the following tips:

1 On your lunch break, take a partial walk, then eat, or vice versa, Stolz-McDonald advises. If you want to connect with someone, ask them to walk with you.

2 Just getting up and standing by your desk helps the blood flow, she said, and you can continue to work while connected to a headset.

3 Stolz-McDonald recommends getting up every hour or two to walk for five minutes – even to bring items to the shredder – to get your body moving and blood flowing.

4 If you can, she adds, ditch the car and walk or bike to work.



5 Break up with your day with stretches, twists or even jumping jacks by your desk.

6 Godfrey says to start each day by moving your body, even for just 10 minutes. Whether it's on a home treadmill or a walk outdoors, starting a day with exercise will provide a physical and mental boost for the rest of the day.

7 You don't have to do everything all at once. Small changes can yield big results, Godfrey says. Set one weekly goal for yourself in an area you would like to improve on.

8 Along with the sedentary job come office treats, whether fresh-made donuts

or gooey brownies. This is where another tip from Godfrey comes in handy: Plan your snacks and meals in advance. Healthy options will help you resist temptations.

These tips aren't a cure-all. Our lifestyles are simply different from those of our grandparents. Machines do much of our work for us. We have more entertainment options. As a result, we sit much more. That's not to say we have to succumb to the perils of modern life. There are ways to start achieving extra years and better health.

Echo Press reporter and copy editor Karen Tolkkinen takes walks on her lunch break.



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