

Sitting is the New Smoking **Tips for Sitting Less and Moving More**

Sitting for prolonged periods of time has been called the “new smoking” due to increased health risks.

According to a study in the 2015 *Annals of Internal Medicine*, “Prolonged sedentary time was independently associated with deleterious health outcomes regardless of physical activity.”

Outcomes associated with sitting for prolonged periods of time included an increased incidence of heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

The Canadian researchers’ conclusions were based on pooled data from 41 international studies. “More than one half of an average person’s day is spent being sedentary — sitting, watching television or working at a computer,” said Dr. David Alter, Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, and senior author of the study.

Exercising for a half hour daily helps, however, it isn’t enough if we’re inactive for the remaining 23 plus hours. The effect was most pronounced in people at lower levels of physical activity than at higher levels.

Here are some tips to get you started sitting less and moving more. Check those you could do, you may be surprised how easy it is to add more activity to your day.

- Take a 1 to 3 minute break every 30 minutes or so during the day. Stand and move around. You can fit this in with other activities such as taking the stairs, walking during a break or during lunch.
- Pace during phone calls.
- Walk over to your co-worker’s desk to talk versus emailing or calling them. Stand once you get there.
- Schedule a regular 5 to 10 minute physical activity break into your day, such as 10 minutes in the morning and again in the afternoon.
- Drink more water. It is good for your body and you will walk more going to the restroom. Use the restroom that is the farthest away.
- Take quick lunch breaks and walk as part of your lunch hour.
- Walk with friend and co-workers. Maybe walk at the park or walk around a few blocks.
- Have standing meetings. An added benefit is standing meetings are usually shorter and more to the point.
- Use some type of fitness tracker or smartphone app that lets you keep track of your steps or miles. Work up to 10,000 or more steps (about 5 miles), a guideline recommended by several health organizations.
- Set a timer to remind you to get up and move.
- Fitness trackers can also let you form groups with friends and co-workers. The motivation of others moving may motivate you as well.

- Participate in physical activities with your children and grand children such as riding bikes, throwing Frisbees or walking the dog.
- While waiting on children a soccer or baseball practice, walk up and down the field or around the block.
- Change channels on the TV manually. Get up and mover during commercials. Stand up while watching TV.
- Park your car farther from your destination.
- Cook more of your meals. You will move more than just picking up food to go or sitting in a restaurant. Plus it will save you money and you will be healthier.
- Clean up your house more often. Vacuum more and keep your carpet cleaner. Mop your floors, scrub your bathroom and clean your base boards. Clean makes you move more.
- Sit on an exercise ball and fidget while you work.
- Walk down every aisle at the grocery store whether you need to or not. But stick to the grocery store for healthy foods.
- Wear comfortable shoes when walking.

The bottom line: This isn't an issue to be taken sitting down!

Reference: University Health Network (UHN). (2015, January 19). Sitting for long periods increases risk of disease and early death, regardless of exercise. Science Daily. Retrieved June 29, 2015 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/01/150119171701.htm