

Blue Cross® VIRTUAL WELL-BEING

Physical activity at work

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, less than 50% of Americans meet guidelines for physical activities. And studies find the average American sits for 13 hours a day. Being sedentary increases a person's risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and early death.



The University of Sydney studied self-reported exercise habits and health exams of more than 63,000 adults. They connected that information to death records and found that people who exercised one to two days a week improved their chances of living longer than people who didn't exercise. In addition, they had an 18% lower risk of dying from cancer and a 40% lower risk of cardiovascular disease.

A Health Enhancement Research Organization at Brigham Young University study found employees who exercise at least 30 minutes three times a week are 15% more likely to have higher

job performance. Since people spend so much time at work, it's a perfect place to encourage activity.

Regular exercise has a positive effect on physical and mental health, including:

- Improved heart health
- Higher energy
- Weight management
- Disease prevention
- Improved immune system
- Improved cognitive health
- Improved mental and emotional health

When your employees exercise regularly, it can have a positive effect of your business with more productive employees, reduced absenteeism and happier employees.

How can you encourage your employees to move more throughout the day?

- Encourage walking meetings, stretching, desk exercises and standing.
- Support activity clubs and provide maps of your worksites and surrounding areas so they can walk, hike or run during their breaks.
- Be creative. Offer onsite fitness classes, have 10-minute daily dance parties, start a worksite garden or sponsor employee teams for community sports.

Any time you can allow your employees the chance to move at work will help them offset the negatives effects of sitting and help them thrive at work.

Sources: totalwellnesshealth.com*, businessnewsdaily.com*, cdc.gov*, hero-health.org*

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